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Romania's Digital Decade 2030 Roadmap

Second Annual Progress Review: Some Progress, but Greater Ambition is Needed

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Executive Summary

In 2025, CRPE published the [first independent assessment of Romania's Digital Decade 2030 Roadmap](#), finding a plan that was less a transformative digital strategy and more a formal bureaucratic compliance exercise. Simply said, a roadmap falling short of the ambition of the EU Digital Decade. We argued that Romania needed to use the 2026 revision milestone to set more ambitious and measurable targets, improve coordination, open the process to meaningful stakeholder consultation and create a proper monitoring framework. Ultimately, realising these objectives requires robust political backing and the ambition to advance the digitalisation agenda.

The roadmap is marked by limited ambition, with targets consistently below EU objectives, indicators that lack coherence, and measures that often fail to address digital priorities directly. Governance is weak and leadership diffuse. Rather than presenting a coherent national strategy, many actions merely repackage pre-existing EU-funded projects originally designed for other purposes. Targets are not only weaker than EU benchmarks, but also contradictory or unrealistic in several cases, lacking interim milestones and raising serious doubts about their credibility. Persistent implementation delays further undermine progress, with projects repeatedly postponed and reporting incomplete or unavailable.

Transparency and oversight are almost nonexistent because the Authority for Digitalisation of Romania is either unable to fulfill its coordinating role, lacking the necessary capacity, instruments and resources, or has simply failed to do so. Critically, the absence of a formal decision-making mechanism or monitoring framework within the plan further exacerbates this issue. Public consultations and stakeholder engagement have been minimal, both during the plan's design and throughout its implementation, further eroding accountability and confidence.

As a result, Romania risks remaining below EU-wide digital objectives and continuing to lag behind other Member States. The 2026 roadmap revision milestone offers an opportunity to move beyond formal compliance toward a genuine strategy. Achieving this requires strong political will and close collaboration among government, business, academia, and civil society. Transparency, co-creation, and shared responsibility can transform the roadmap into a driver of digital transformation.

(Conclusions of the 2025 evaluation of the Roadmap)

One year later, we are continuing this work with our second assessment of the roadmap, as part of our commitment to monitor its implementation annually throughout the Digital Decade programme. The EU framework is designed as a cycle of monitoring, recommendations and adjustment: Member States are expected to revise their national roadmaps every two years, taking into account the Commission's recommendations and changes in their national priorities and investments.

Our 2026 assessment is not encouraging. Romania has made some progress in implementing projects included in the roadmap, but the roadmap itself has remained largely

unchanged. There has been no meaningful revision, adjustment or public consultation process. Romania has failed to submit a revised roadmap up until now. This is happening despite the fact that 24 Member States had already submitted roadmap adjustments by June 2026, while the next deadline is December 2026.

According to the 2026 Digital Decade reporting, Romanian public authorities reported that a revision process had started in March 2026. However, our research does not identify evidence of a substantive revision process having taken place since then. There are indications that a process could start in autumn 2026, following a public tender issued by the Authority for the Digitalization of Romania (ADR) to secure support services, but this leaves very little time for a meaningful exercise and raises the risk that Romania will once again miss the opportunity to properly revise its roadmap before the December deadline. For us, the question is not simply whether a document will eventually be submitted to the European Commission. The real question is whether Romania will use this revision to rethink its digital priorities, organise a genuine and transparent process, consult those who can provide support or are expected to implement the priorities and build a roadmap that can actually guide digital transformation until (and even after) 2030.

1. Why is it important to adjust the roadmap?

There are several main reasons why Romania needs to revise its Digital Decade roadmap now.

The first is the weaknesses of the initial plan itself. Our 2025 and 2026 assessments found a roadmap that fell short of functioning as a genuine national digital strategy. [The 2026 European Commission assessment confirms some of these concerns.](#) Romania has set 11 national targets out of 14 possible, but only 36% are aligned with the EU 2030 targets. In its national roadmap, Romania provided only one trajectory point for 2025 out of 13 analysed. Romania has also addressed only 50% of the eight recommendations issued by the Commission in 2025.

At the same time, Romania remains at the bottom of the EU on several important indicators, from basic digital skills and the uptake of advanced technologies by businesses to 5G connectivity, while continuing to perform strongly on only a limited number of indicators, most notably fixed connectivity infrastructure. The European Commission itself identifies low basic digital skills, weak SME and start-up innovation and low technology uptake as major constraints on Romania's digital competitiveness. Other areas remain much less clear, including access to some digital public services, particularly e-health records, as well as indicators such as edge nodes, where data quality and availability remain problematic. Our research also raises questions about the reliability and comparability of some of the data used to assess progress, a challenge underlined also by the Commission. The current roadmap does not adequately respond to these concerns. It does not provide a sufficiently clear picture of where Romania needs to go, how it intends to get there or how progress should be measured.

The second reason is the end of numerous projects and of the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP) funding cycle and the need to align new digital projects with the requirements of the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) 2028-2034. Romania's roadmap relies heavily on projects financed through the NRRP, many of which reaching their end in August 2026. Moreover, according to the European Commission's 2026 country report, Romania's national roadmap currently includes seven measures with a total budget of €3.89 billion, of which 38% are set to expire by the end of 2026. These measures represent €2.31 billion in public funding, or 64% of the total public budget allocation under the roadmap.

This means that Romania risks reaching the end of the current funding cycle without a clear plan for what comes next. With NRRP funding winding down, Romania needs to define its priorities for the coming years and make full use of the opportunities available under the next MFF. The next EU funding cycle will be particularly important. The Commission is already calling on Member States to align future digital investments more closely with strategic priorities and the next MFF, including through the preparation of National and Regional Partnership Plans (NRPPs) and the future EU Competitiveness Fund.

This matters because the next funding cycle, and especially the timely preparation of the NRRPs, will cover many of the areas where Romania still has significant gaps: 5G and digital infrastructure, basic and advanced digital skills, digitalisation of businesses, and digital public services. If Romania wants to finance major digital investments through future EU funding, these priorities need to be clearly identified, justified and reflected in the relevant planning instruments.

The roadmap therefore needs to become the place where Romania decides what its digital priorities are for the coming years, how it will finance them and how digital investments will contribute to closing the gaps in skills, business digitalisation, or public services.

The third reason is that the Digital Decade framework itself is entering a redesign phase. The Commission started the process of reviewing the Digital Decade Policy Programme with a new programme expected in early to mid 2027. The review is intended to ensure that the targets and objectives continue to reflect new legislation, the rapidly evolving technological landscape and Europe's priorities beyond 2030. The Commission has also indicated that the framework will be modernised, simplified and extended beyond 2030. This means that some indicators and targets may change, while new ones may be introduced in response to technological, economic and geopolitical developments and changing policy priorities.

2. Where are we now?

For CRPE, the key question is no longer whether Romania needs a better Digital Decade roadmap, as it does, but whether the Government and ADR will actually use the 2026 momentum to build one, or at least to start a meaningful revision process.

The current roadmap is reaching a turning point. A large part of its financial and operational basis is coming to an end, while Romania needs to decide what should replace it, which priorities should be maintained, what new investments are needed and how these should contribute to the EU's 2030 targets. The next revision therefore

cannot simply add a few new projects to the existing document. It needs to rethink the roadmap as a genuine national digital strategy, with clear priorities, realistic but ambitious targets, responsible institutions, funding, timelines and measurable results.

3. What do we propose?

Beyond Romania's low level of ambition and the weak alignment of its indicators with the EU's Digital Decade 2030 goals, the main problem is that the roadmap does not function as a genuine strategy and lacks sufficient political backing. Its weak link between individual EU-funded projects and broader digital objectives makes it difficult to assess real progress. The strategy also needs much better monitoring and transparency: not only what has been funded and announced, but what has been delivered, who has benefited and whether Romania is moving closer to its 2030 targets. This should be done regularly through public dashboards and progress reports, rather than relying only on the Commission's annual monitoring. ADR should take the lead in making this information available.

The revision is also an opportunity to finally open the process. ADR should start a genuine and transparent consultation, involving the institutions implementing the roadmap, but also civil society, business, academia, local authorities and other relevant stakeholders. The revision should not be a closed administrative exercise, but a chance to build a roadmap around Romania's real digital priorities and challenges.

CRPE's recommendations build on the findings of our two assessments and focus on making the roadmap more ambitious, more coherent and more accountable:

- **Revise the roadmap through a genuine public process, involving civil society, business, academia and other relevant stakeholders, rather than treating the revision as an administrative exercise.** As previously underlined, the process should be anchored in a clear governance structure coordinated or supported by the Chancellery of the Prime Minister and the Ministry of Economy, Digitalisation, Entrepreneurship and Tourism, with ADR acting as the operational lead and empowered with the political support necessary to set and deliver on more ambitious goals.
- **Publish an interim evaluation of the roadmap and open access to information on the current implementation status of all projects and measures.** An independent assessment would provide a useful baseline for the revision and help identify which measures should be continued, adjusted or discontinued.
- **Enhance transparency by committing to the regular publication of information on all projects and measures,** ideally every six months, including implementation status, funding, responsible institutions and results.
- **Introduce intermediate milestones for the indicators and publish an alignment matrix.** Romania should establish clear national targets with intermediate yearly milestones under each Digital Decade pillar. These targets should be supported by measurable indicators to enable effective monitoring and progress evaluation.

- **Set more ambitious and measurable national targets, clearly connected to the EU's Digital Decade objectives, the announced revision of the Digital Decade programme and Romania's actual gaps.** National targets must not merely meet the EU's minimum requirements, let alone fall short of them.
- **Move beyond a list of projects.** Introduce an outcome- and impact-oriented framework that clearly links objectives, targets, measures, indicators and projects. The roadmap should move beyond being a collection of predominantly EU-funded projects and become a coherent national framework for delivering on Romania's Digital Decade objectives.
- **Plan for the post-2028 period, committing national funds and identifying new sources of financing and ensuring that digital priorities are reflected in the next EU funding cycle.** This should include early alignment with the National and Regional Partnership Plans and future EU funding

instruments. The Commission has explicitly linked the future of Digital Decade investments to the next MFF and the preparation of these national and regional plans.

- **Strengthen governance and coordination, with a clear mandate for ADR, defined responsibilities across institutions and a functioning mechanism for decision-making and monitoring.** This has been a major issue until now. The roadmap needs political ownership at the highest level, alongside a clear operational structure capable of coordinating implementation.
- **Measure outcomes, not just spending and activities.** The strategy needs to evaluate whether people are actually gaining digital skills, businesses are becoming more digitally competitive, public institutions are delivering better digital services and citizens are able to use them, not simply whether projects have been launched, contracts signed or funds spent.

Pillar	National objectives vs. EU 2030 targets	Measures: Implementation	Measures: Assessment & Strength vs. 2030 objectives	Openness, Inclusiveness and Transparency
 Digital Skills	Lower ambitions	Middle stages	Medium alignment	Low
 Digital Transformation of Businesses	Lower ambitions	Middle stages	Low-to-medium alignment	Low
 Digitalization of Public Services	Partially lacking targets and objectives	Middle stages	Low-to-medium alignment	Low
 Secure and Sustainable Digital Infrastructure	Partially lacking targets and objectives	Medium-to-advanced stages	Low alignment	Low

Source: Based on the authors' own evaluation, see the Annex for further details

Introduction

This monitoring exercise, now in its second consecutive annual edition, is conducted by the Romanian Centre for European Policies, one of the leading Romanian think-tanks. In 2025, we published the first independent analysis of the roadmap, alongside the first centralised implementation progress report, making all measures and indicators publicly available in an editable format. We are continuing this work in 2026 because transparency remains critical, and the need to continuously improve the roadmap is ongoing. Unfortunately, there have been few meaningful changes in the roadmap's level of transparency.

The Digital Decade Policy Program sets the European Union's vision for digital transformation by 2030. With ambitious targets and a shared framework, the program aims to ensure that the EU remains competitive and resilient in the face of rapid technological change. The strategy is built around four key pillars:

Skills: At least 80% of EU citizens should have basic digital skills, with over 20 million ICT specialists employed, and gender gaps in ICT professions significantly reduced.

Businesses: 75% of companies should adopt advanced technologies such as cloud, AI, and big data. The number of EU "unicorns" should double. More than 90% of SMEs should reach a basic level of digital intensity.

Infrastructure: 100% universal gigabit connectivity, deployment of cutting-edge semiconductors to double the EU share in global production, 10,000 climate-neutral secure edge nodes, and the first quantum-accelerated computer by 2030.

Public Services: 100% online access to key public services, e-health and digital ID.

To deliver these objectives, EU Member States were required to prepare national Digital Decade roadmaps, outlining their contribution to the EU targets, detailing measures, and setting out milestones. They can also revise their national roadmaps every two years, updating contributions and aligning with EU-level targets. The first Annual State of the Digital Decade Report was published in September 2023, offering the baseline against which national progress is measured.

The Commission also supports the implementation of the Digital Decade policy through several instruments:

- A structured monitoring framework based on the Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI).
- An annual progress report assessing Member States' performance and providing recommendations.
- A mechanism to support multinational projects

2026 Review of the Digital Decade Policy Programme

In 2026, the European Commission published its review of the Digital Decade Policy Programme (DDPP), assessing whether its objectives, targets and monitoring framework remain fit for purpose in light of rapid technological, geopolitical and economic developments. The review identifies nine priority areas shaping Europe's digital transformation: digital infrastructure and connectivity, cybersecurity and resilience, advanced technologies, sustainability, digital rights and inclusion, digital skills, digital public services, competitiveness, and digital sovereignty.

The review finds that progress towards the existing 2030 targets remains uneven. While digital public services are broadly on track, digital skills, infrastructure and business digitalisation continue to require greater effort and investment. Importantly, the review identifies a limitation also relevant to the assessment of Romania:

the existing framework often measures the availability of digital infrastructure and services rather than their actual uptake and impact.

To address these gaps, the review proposes a revised monitoring framework comprising 21 KPIs, including new or adapted indicators measuring e-government and e-ID uptake, cybersecurity preparedness, AI-ready computing capacity, data-centre capacity, use of European cloud services, business data sharing and access to risk capital. The proposed framework also introduces differentiated ambition levels and extends the monitoring horizon to 2035.

The review further calls for stronger investment in digital infrastructure, skills and advanced technologies, closer integration of the DDPP with the 2028-2034 Multiannual Financial Framework, and stronger coordination across EU, national, regional and local levels.

The 2026 State of the Digital Decade Report confirms many of the concerns previously identified regarding Romania's level of ambition. Romania has established only 11 out of the 14 possible national Digital Decade targets and only 36% of those targets are fully aligned with the EU 2030 objectives. Although Romania is considered on track regarding the limited trajectory data submitted to the Commission, the overall ambition of the roadmap remains modest compared to EU expectations.

At the same time, the Commission acknowledges that Romania addressed approximately 50% of the recommendations issued in 2025 through new policy

actions and measures. Progress has been recorded in several areas, including connectivity, artificial intelligence, semiconductors and digital public services. Nevertheless, substantial structural weaknesses continue to hinder Romania's digital transformation.

The Commission's overall assessment is that Romania remains characterised by a persistent gap between strong infrastructure performance and a relatively weak innovation ecosystem. Limited access to finance, low levels of research and development expenditure, difficulties in scaling digital start-ups and persistent shortages in digital skills continue to constrain the

country's digital competitiveness. Without stronger political ownership, more effective governance structures and sustainable post-RRF financing, current progress risks remaining fragmented and insufficient to achieve meaningful convergence with EU digital objectives.

Digital Skills: Digital skills remain one of Romania's most significant structural weaknesses. According to the 2026 Digital Decade Report, only 31.84% of Romanians aged 16-74 possess at least basic digital skills. Although this represents an increase of 7.2% compared to the previous year and exceeds the EU average growth rate, Romania remains far below the EU average of 60.40%. Significant disparities remain across demographic groups. Men record a basic digital skills level of 33.35%, compared to 30.37% among women, producing a gender gap of 2.98 percentage points. Educational attainment remains a determining factor. Among individuals with low levels of formal education, only 14.25% possess basic digital skills, substantially below the EU average of 37.56%. While recent growth among this group is encouraging, the gap remains considerable.

The Commission acknowledges positive progress through the adoption of the DigCompRo framework, which provides a common national framework for digital competences. However, public policy support continues to focus predominantly on civil servants and unemployed individuals, while limited attention is paid to employees in the private sector and older populations. In addition, plans to reduce the number of public libraries designated as digital skills hubs risk deepening regional and social digital divides.

The situation regarding ICT specialists presents a mixed picture. Romania continues to perform exceptionally well in ICT graduates, who represent 7.10% of all graduates, among the highest shares in the European Union. Romania also remains the EU leader regarding the proportion of women among ICT specialists, who account for 27.8% of the profession. However, ICT specialists represent only 2.7% of total employment, significantly below the EU average of 5.0% and far from the Digital Decade objective of 10% by 2030. More concerning, the number of ICT specialists declined by 3.6% in 2025. The Commission regards this trend as a warning sign for the Romanian technology sector, suggesting that the traditional competitive model based on relatively low labour costs and a strong supply of graduates may be reaching its limits.

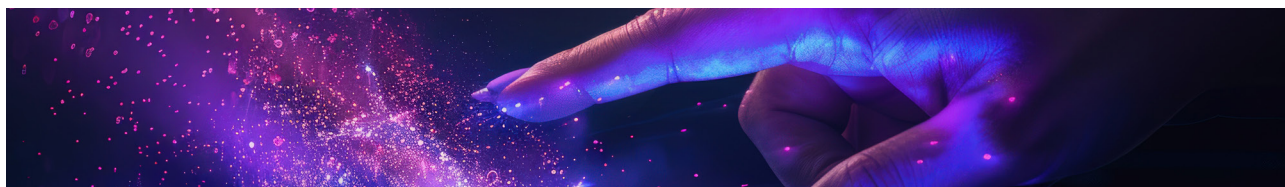
Digital Transformation of Businesses: EU goals are 75% of businesses using cloud/AI/big data and 90% of SMEs with basic digital intensity. Romania's targets are significantly lower, with 40% cloud, 10% AI, 15% big data, and 75% SMEs with basic intensity. The baseline starts from much lower figures in Romania: 11% cloud (EU 34%), 1% AI (EU 8%), 5% big data (EU 14%), and 53% SME intensity (EU 69%). Even for these less-ambitious targets, there are virtually no specific measures supporting the use of cloud, AI, or big data

envisaged in the roadmap. Instead, most funding is allocated to supporting businesses and their digital transformation in general, lacking clear indicators that would align with the EU's specific goals.

Digital Public Services: The EU aims for 100% of public services online, universal e-ID, and full access to e-health records. Romania continued to make progress in digital public services during 2025. Its overall digital public services score reached 64.25 points out of 100, representing a 2.4% increase compared to the previous year. However, this remains substantially below the EU average of 84.64 points. Important differences persist between services provided to domestic users and those available in cross-border contexts. Digital public services for national citizens achieved a score of 74.00 points, while cross-border services for citizens scored only 54.52 points. This suggests that interoperability and cross-border integration remain underdeveloped. The Commission recognises progress in the establishment of Romania's governmental cloud infrastructure. Nevertheless, substantial challenges remain. The migration of public sector applications into the cloud has progressed slowly, the development of the cloud marketplace remains incomplete, and Romania still struggles to implement the once-only principle. Work on the National Interoperability Platform has begun, and the ROePAS portal has been launched as a national single digital gateway. However, the Commission observes that users continue to encounter fragmented experiences due to inconsistent interfaces, functionalities and navigation across linked government services.

The situation in eHealth remains particularly concerning. Romania has not adopted the long-awaited strategy for the digitalisation of the health system. While existing projects continue to be implemented, no major new initiatives were introduced in 2025. Access to electronic health records has largely stagnated.

Digital Infrastructure: EU targets include universal gigabit, full 5G, double EU share in global production in semiconductor capacity, 10,000 edge nodes, and a quantum computer. The 2026 Digital Decade Report identifies artificial intelligence and semiconductors as areas where Romania has demonstrated increasing ambition. The Commission specifically notes Romania's intention to position itself as a regional leader in artificial intelligence and recognises progress in strengthening its presence within the semiconductor ecosystem. These developments represent important opportunities for Romania's future competitiveness. However, the Commission cautions that success in advanced technologies depends on addressing broader structural constraints. Limited venture capital, low research and development expenditure, insufficient support for digital start-ups and weak connections between research institutions and industry continue to undermine innovation capacity.



Digital Objective	Subcategory / Target	EU target (2030)	Romania baseline (2023)	Romania target (2030)	DESI progress report Romania (2024)	DESI progress report Romania (2025)	Responsible Institutions
 Digital Skills: Population with digital skills & ICT professionals	At least 80% of people aged 16–74 with basic digital skills	80%	27.7%	50%	-	31.80%	Ministry of Education and Research; Ministry of Labor, Family, Youth and Social Protection
	ICT specialists – 20M in EU (~10% of workforce), with more women & graduates	~10%	2.6%	4% ¹	2.8%	2.70%	Ministry of Education and Research; Ministry of Labor and Social Protection
 Digital Transformation of Businesses	Cloud	75%	15.5%	40%	-	22.10%	Ministry of Economy, Entrepreneurship, Digitalisation and Tourism, Ministry of Investments and European Projects
	Big Data	75%	21.9%	15%	-	35.10%	Ministry of Economy, Entrepreneurship, Digitalisation and Tourism, Ministry of Investments and European Projects
	AI	75%	1.5%	10%	3.1%	5.20%	Ministry of Economy, Entrepreneurship, Digitalisation and Tourism, Ministry of Investments and European Projects
	Unicorns	500+ (EU)	-	4	-	0	Ministry of Economy, Entrepreneurship, Digitalisation and Tourism
	SMEs with basic digital intensity	90%	-	75%	69.1%	44.30%	Ministry of Economy, Entrepreneurship, Digitalisation and Tourism, Ministry of Investments and European Projects
 Digitalisation of Public Services	Key services for citizens	100%	52.2%	100%	62.7%	64.2%	Public sector institutions accountable for essential services
	Key services for businesses	100%	50.0 %	100%	55.1%	66.8%	Public sector institutions accountable for essential services
	Electronic Identity (eID)	100% EU citizens access	-	100% ²	-	eID scheme notified (Yes)	Authority for Digitalisation of Romania; Ministry of Internal Affairs
	E-Health services	100%	-	-	75.1%	75.1%	Ministry of Health; National Health Insurance House
 Secure and Sustainable Digital infrastructures	Gigabit connectivity	100%	95.0%	99%	95.9%	96.50%	Ministry of Economy, Entrepreneurship, Digitalisation and Tourism, National Authority for Management and Regulation in Communications
	Fibre to the Premises (FTTP)	-	95.0%	99%	95.7%	96.30%	Ministry of Economy, Entrepreneurship, Digitalisation and Tourism, National Authority for Management and Regulation in Communications
	5G coverage	100%	27%	62%	46.8%	59.30%	Ministry of Economy, Entrepreneurship, Digitalisation and Tourism, National Authority for Management and Regulation in Communications
	Semiconductors	double EU share in global production	-	-	-	No specific KPI reported; Romania strengthened its position in semiconductors	Ministry of Economy, Entrepreneurship, Digitalisation and Tourism
	Quantum computing	first computer with quantum acceleration	-	-	-	No national KPI reported	Ministry of Economy, Entrepreneurship, Digitalisation and Tourism Ministry of Investments and European Projects
	Edge Nodes	10,000	5	113 ³	11	252	Ministry of Economy, Entrepreneurship, Digitalisation and Tourism, National Authority for Management and Regulation in Communications

Source: The data presented in this table are drawn from the DESI Digital Report for Romania 2025 and 2026, the Digital Decade Roadmap for Romania, and the Memorandum approving Romania's implementation plan.

¹ The figures cited for this metric are highly inconsistent: the national memorandum approving the roadmap states 6%, the plan itself contains no figures, and the DESI 2025 Digital Report indicates 4%.

² The 100% indicator is only cited within the national memorandum approving the plan. In contrast, the roadmap includes no official figures, only one of the measures includes a total number of provided e-IDs, while the DESI Digital Report provides no data for this metric.

³ The indicator is documented only within the national roadmap as a component of a specific measure, yet no official target has been formally adopted. Furthermore, this figure is absent from both the memorandum and the DESI Digital Report.

National Monitoring Approach and methodology application

A. Monitoring Process

This monitoring exercise applies a civic methodology structured around four main components, that was defined in 2025 and was part of our first independent assessment of Romania's National Digital Decade Action Plan. The 2026 assessment follows the same format as the previous assessment, incorporating new data and a comparison between 2026 and 2025. Where the evaluation and underlying findings remained unchanged, relevant sections from the previous report have also been retained and form part of the 2026 assessment. The action plan remains unchanged in terms of measures, objectives, and indicators.

The report is structured around: (1) Assessment of Alignment and Strength of the national roadmap with the EU Digital Decade 2030 objectives, (2) Assessment

of Implementation of the identified measures, including a comparison between 2025 and 2026 (3) Assessment of Openness, Inclusiveness, and Transparency of both the roadmap's preparation and subsequent updates, and (4) Conclusions and Recommendations. This monitoring exercise is an analysis of a public policy, not a technical report. The research's core goal is to assess the relevancy and consistency of the Romanian roadmap against the EU Digital Decade objectives, specifically examining how each priority and measure aligns with the overarching European digital goals.

The comprehensive assessment data supporting this analysis is contained within the Annex appended to this report, which provides a detailed breakdown and evaluation of all measures.

B. Main Actors Involved

The assessment focused on the public authorities directly responsible for the implementation, monitoring, and coordination of the measures and objectives included in Romania's Digital Decade National Action Plan. To assess the implementation process and the availability of relevant information, the Romanian Centre for European Policies engaged with the responsible institutions through direct consultations and requests submitted under the Freedom of Information legislation (FOIA).

The assessment covered the line ministries responsible for implementing specific measures and objectives under the plan, as well as the Authority for the Digitalisation of Romania (ADR), which has a coordinating role in the overall implementation process. The institutions consulted or approached through information requests included the Ministry of Education and Research; the Ministry of Labour, Family, Youth and Social Protection; the Ministry of Economy, Entrepreneurship, Digitalisation and Tourism; the Ministry of Investments and European

Projects; the Ministry of Internal Affairs; the Ministry of Health; and the National Authority for Management and Regulation in Communications (ANCOM), together with the public authorities and institutions operating under their coordination. This institutional mapping was intended to provide a comprehensive assessment of the extent to which relevant authorities are implementing the commitments set out in the roadmap and making information on progress, measures, and indicators publicly accessible.

In particular, discussions were organised with ADR to better understand the progress made in implementing the roadmap, the mechanisms in place for monitoring and reporting, and the institutional challenges encountered in coordinating and tracking implementation. The engagement with line ministries focused on their respective responsibilities, progress, and availability of data related to the implementation of the measures under their remit.

C. Sources and Evidence

The current analysis is based on several sources of information and methods of verification. These include official documents, interviews with stakeholders, FOIA requests to all responsible institutions of the EU Digital Decade National Action Plan, and publicly available data. In addition, secondary data sources such as independent reports, studies, and EU monitoring documents were also reviewed. The monitoring took place between May and September 2026. A database containing all planned measures, their alignment with EU digital goals and priorities, implementation stage, strengths, and current status is provided within the Annex and will be made publicly available in an open format.

We obtained the project progress and implementation data from most of the responsible institutions, and we thank them for their support. However, similar to the 2025 assessment, the quality of this data presented significant challenges. Responses were frequently incomplete, lacked adequate structure, or were confined to formal acknowledgments of projects, often omitting necessary progress reports, any metrics or measurable indicators of implementation. These systemic limitations partially constrained the ability to evaluate progress with accuracy and transparency in some cases, underscoring weaknesses in institutional accountability and public information access.

D. Limitations

The monitoring process for the roadmap has encountered significant limitations, [a gap that we have also underlined in our 2025 report](#). A large proportion of the measures outlined in the national roadmap lack clear indicators or fail to adequately articulate their contribution to the overarching Digital Decade objectives. Consequently, the centralised data presented in this report’s Annex is the result of independent efforts made by the authors, based on a similar format used in 2025.

While acknowledging the inherent challenges faced by ADR in coordinating stakeholders and compiling data for the roadmap, its approach to transparency remains restrictive. There has been some improvement in engagement during the 2026 assessment, as ADR responded to FOIA requests and demonstrated a greater

willingness to discuss the institutional challenges involved in designing, monitoring, and reporting on the roadmap. However, the responses provided were often vague and did not consistently include the specific, verifiable information requested, limiting their usefulness for independent monitoring.

ADR also continues to face significant challenges in compiling and centralising data for its own monitoring and reporting processes. As a result, there is still no comprehensive, centralised, and publicly accessible overview of implementation progress and underlying data. This gap is particularly notable given that CRPE has developed and published a database consolidating the roadmap’s measures and indicators, which could provide a practical basis for public authorities to verify, update, and improve their own monitoring and reporting processes.

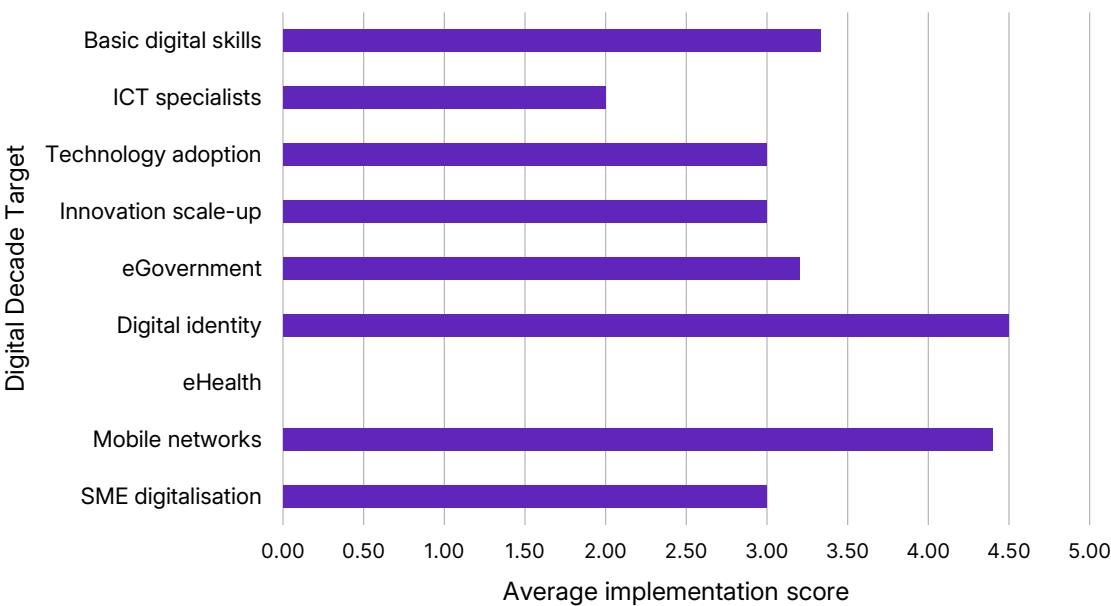
Assessment of the alignment and strength of the Roadmap's measures/actions vs. 2030 objective

Adequate	Partially adequate	Not adequate	Total measures
14	57	11	82

Implementation of the actions/measures envisaged in the national roadmap (2026)

Digital Decade Target	Basic digital skills	ICT specialists	Technology adoption	Innovation scale-up	eGovernment	Digital identity	eHealth	Mobile networks	SME digitalisation
Average implementation score	3.33	2.00	3.00	3.00	3.20	4.50	N/A	4.40	3.00

Digital Decade key objectives - alignment



Source: Based on the authors’ own evaluation, see the Annex for further details

Assessment of progress in implementing the national digital decade roadmap

A. Digital Skills

1. Context and Priorities

The EU's 2030 Digital Decade strategy sets two key targets under the Digital Skills priority: at least 80% of the population (16-74 y.o) with basic digital skills and 20 million ICT specialists across the Union. According to the 2026 Digital Decade report, Romania is far from these benchmarks. Only 31.8% of the population in Romania possesses basic digital skills in 2025, well below the EU average of 55.6% and slightly higher than Romania's 2024 result of 27.7%. The share of ICT specialists in employment remains low, at 2.7% (2.8% in 2024), compared to the EU average of 5.0%. These trends show that Romania urgently needs to accelerate its digital skills development to align with the EU's Digital Decade objectives.

Romania has set itself relatively modest national targets in this area. For basic digital skills, it aims to reach 50% of the population by 2030. However, meeting even this reduced ambition requires a significant increase in progress. The national roadmap notes that Romania's current growth rate in digital skills acquisition is around 1% per year, but achieving the 50% target would require an annual increase of 3.1%. While this year-to-year required increase was eventually surpassed in 2025, the overall trend remains uneven. For instance, basic digital skill levels in 2022 were identical to those recorded in 2024.

Moreover, the breakdown of the population's expected digital skills raises questions and shows rather inconsistent patterns of potential growth. While the report forecasts 100% coverage among public sector employees, unemployed people, and NEETs by 2030, it estimates only 40% for private sector employees and 15% for those working in agriculture. These figures appear rather inconsistent and are poorly explained, relying largely on demographic assumptions and planned public sector initiatives rather than a comprehensive strategy. Gender convergence is completely missing from the measures, despite a clear gender gap in basic digital skills (29% for men versus 26% for women). Furthermore, the measures specifically targeting rural and underserved areas and low-education populations with limited digital skills are noticeably lagging in implementation.

Regarding ICT specialists, Romania aims to increase their number from 214,644 in 2023 (2.8% of the employed population) to 400,000 by 2030. This would represent 2% of the EU's total ICT workforce by 2030. In 2025, there is however a slight decrease compared to 2024, with only 2.7% employed population. The baseline projection included in the national roadmap suggests that Romania will reach only 256,371 ICT specialists by 2030, a figure far below the target. A combination of increased investments and changes in the labor market

and a growing demand for ICT specialists is assumed to help Romania achieve this target. However, the gender imbalance may continue to remain high, with only around a quarter of ICT specialists being women.

To achieve its two key objectives, Romania has put forward 16 measures, but these are not new initiatives, as they are largely drawn from existing EU-funded programs, particularly the NRRP, complemented by measures under the 2021-2027 MFF, in areas such as health, education, employment, SMEs, and public services. The measures contain other primary objectives, consequently relegating the digital objectives to, at best, a secondary status. While coordinating efforts across multiple funding streams can be relevant to ensure consistency, the report fails to explain how these disparate measures will work together to achieve the broader roadmap goals. Their effectiveness will depend heavily on proper coordination, transparency, and inclusiveness, which for now seems to be lagging behind.

2. Assessment of Alignment and Strength

The roadmap demonstrates only medium alignment with EU priorities. While it places considerable emphasis on hardware investments and training programs in sectors such as education and public administration, where the target is 100% basic digital skills coverage by 2030, it lacks a comprehensive vision for raising digital skills across the general population. This is particularly challenging given the inconsistencies within the plan itself: groups identified as being most at risk of digital exclusion, such as private sector employees, agricultural workers, and self-employed individuals, are projected to have the lowest digital skills levels by 2030, yet very few measures directly target them. There is also a pronounced deficiency in the coordination between measures related to education and labor, despite the necessity of this synergy to meet key digital objectives (i.e., achieving 50% digital skills and increasing ICT specialists). These measures are characterised by singularity, being treated as entirely separate efforts. The two responsible institutions for this pillar, the Ministry of Education and Research and the Ministry of Labor, Family, Youth and Social Protection, each execute their respective components, largely based on EU-funded programs, with virtually no connection or joint effort linking the work of the two ministries or explaining any potential synergies.

Many of the measures presented, ranging from initiatives to develop soft digital skills (training programs and lifelong learning) to hardware investments in the private sector, education, and public services could, in principle, make a significant

contribution to both the basic digital skills and ICT specialist objectives if fully implemented. However, their coherence and the explanation of how they connect to the overall goals remain weak. For example, it is unclear how investments in sector-specific infrastructure, such as e-health and telemedicine (Measure 4: Developing of the e-health and telemedicine system), contribute to either increasing the number of ICT specialists or expanding the population's basic digital skills, as the measure seems to better support Digitalisation of public services priority.

Similarly, Measure 7: Support for young people in the labor market (from the Education and Occupation Program, POE 2021–2027) is primarily designed to improve employability, yet it does not clearly explain its role in achieving the roadmap's digital skills targets, despite the plan's assumption that NEETs and unemployed people will reach 100% basic digital skills by 2030. The roadmap itself acknowledges this gap for all measures part of the program: "In the EU Operational Program 'Education and Occupation' 2021–2027, there are investment priorities that will contribute to the digital objective, but they are not yet broken down into specific actions." Other measures display similar lack of clarity. Measure 6: Digitalisation of the NGO sector is partially relevant for improving access among the target groups supported by NGOs but fails to demonstrate its overall impact on digital skills or ICT workforce development. Likewise, Measure 5: Digitalisation in labor and social protection identifies necessary public investments but does not specify how these will advance the digital skills objectives.

At the same time, some of the initiatives offer stronger inclusiveness potential. For instance, Measure 3: Transforming libraries into digital hubs could make a meaningful contribution to expanding access to basic digital skills if implemented effectively. Similarly, Measure 14: Providing digital equipment and technological resources for educational institutions or Measure 15: On-the-job training program for teaching staff can significantly contribute to Romania's broader digitalisation goals. Unfortunately, metrics and progress reports are still lagging.

Overall, Romania's ambition remains modest, even considering its low starting point. Even with full implementation, the current set of measures is unlikely to suffice to close the digital divide or achieve the 50% basic digital skills target by 2030. Furthermore, these measures fail to demonstrate how they support the broader EU digital objectives under the Digital Skills priority.

3. Assessment of Implementation

The findings and concerns identified in the 2025 assessment remain broadly valid for the 2026 evaluation. Romania has continued to advance the implementation of several measures, with some projects, particularly those linked to the Recovery and Resilience Plan (RRP), moving faster than others due to the August 2026 deadline. There are therefore visible pockets of progress, including projects that have reached implementation or advanced stages. However, progress remains uneven across measures, and the acceleration of individual projects does not yet translate

into a clear, coherent picture of progress towards the Basic Digital Skills objectives. As in 2025, the overall contribution of many measures to the EU Digital Decade targets remains insufficiently articulated, making it difficult to assess whether implementation is producing the intended improvements in digital skills.

A key issue in the assessment is the limited evidence of a concrete link between the measures and improvements in digital skills. In a number of cases, projects appear to pursue broader objectives, such as employment support or infrastructure development, without explaining how these activities are expected to improve citizens' digital skills (especially the ones considered most digitally vulnerable) or contribute to the relevant Digital Decade targets. Investments in general hardware or digital infrastructure may create conditions that could support the development of digital skills, but the link is rarely demonstrated through a clear intervention logic or measurable outcomes. This makes it difficult to distinguish between measures that directly develop digital competences and those that may only have an indirect or potential contribution. The 2026 reporting would therefore benefit from a much clearer explanation of the causal link between each project, its activities, its intended beneficiaries, and the specific digital skills outcomes it is expected to deliver.

More fundamentally, the availability and quality of monitoring data remain insufficient to evaluate actual impact. Reporting frequently focuses on implementation outputs, for example, the number of trainings delivered, participants certified, institutions equipped, or projects launched, but provides little evidence of what changed as a result. Completing a training programme does not, in itself, demonstrate an improvement in digital skills, nor does the deployment of equipment demonstrate that it is being effectively used. In many cases, there are no meaningful usage indicators, outcome metrics, or qualitative evaluations that could establish whether beneficiaries acquired or improved relevant competences. This represents a major limitation for assessing effectiveness: without evidence on how services, platforms, equipment or training are actually used and what outcomes they generate, it is not possible to determine whether implementation is translating into real improvements in digital skills. Consequently, while the faster implementation of some RRP and other projects is a positive development, the fundamental concerns raised in 2025 regarding coherence, measurability, impact monitoring and the demonstrated contribution to Romania's 2030 digital skills objectives remain applicable in 2026.

4. Assessment of Openness and Inclusiveness

The findings and concerns identified in the 2025 assessment remain broadly valid for the 2026 evaluation. Openness and transparency remain persistently low. Although program announcements and funding calls are published, as all measures fall under EU-funded programs, progress reporting continues to be a major challenge. There are very little available relevant data on the status of the measures themselves, but also on how the measures will support achieving the general objectives of the

priority. Significant data gaps undermine accountability: there is no updated information, available statistics are scarce, completion rates are not reported, and gender or regional breakdowns are never published. This lack of transparency and inclusiveness weakens both accountability and public trust in the roadmap.

The civil society role throughout the process, from design to monitoring, is minimal, with little evidence of meaningful stakeholder engagement.

5. Conclusions on Progress

Romania is unlikely to meet either the 50% target for basic digital skills or the target of 400,000 ICT specialists by 2030 without a significant acceleration of efforts. While the roadmap itself acknowledges the need for additional measures to accelerate progress under both priorities, it does not provide sufficient information on the implementation or impact of existing measures, nor does it include systematic progress reporting or reviews.

Although the share of the population with basic digital skills has increased at a higher pace between 2024 and 2025, the country remains well below the 50% target. The ICT share of the employed population slightly dropped. Moreover, the lack of an updated action plan and meaningful stakeholder consultation limits the strategic coherence of the initiatives currently being implemented. Without a clear assessment of

what is working, where gaps remain, and how measures should be adjusted, individual initiatives risk remaining fragmented and are unlikely to provide a sufficiently coordinated strategy for accelerating progress on either indicator.

More fundamentally, the National Action Plan for the Digital Decade 2030 appears to function primarily as a collection of EU-funded projects rather than as a coherent, impact-driven national strategy. The measures are largely framed and monitored in terms of activities, outputs and funding absorption, with limited evidence of how they collectively contribute to sustained progress against the national targets. EU funding is not complemented by meaningful national investment, which constrains both the scale of interventions and their continuity beyond individual funding cycles. These limitations are compounded by the absence of effective coordination, both for the implementation of the roadmap itself and, more broadly, for the governance of Romania's digital transformation.

While some initiatives have the potential to contribute to the targets, their scale, coverage, and inclusiveness remain limited. In the absence of additional national investment, an impact-oriented implementation framework, and clear institutional coordination, individual measures are likely to remain fragmented and dependent on EU funding cycles. Overall, the current pace and approach are unlikely to be sufficient to achieve even the national targets, let alone the broader objectives set for 2030.

6. Recommendations

- Embed digital skills assessment, guidance, and learning pathways into existing public-service interactions with groups likely to have limited digital skills, particularly through employment, social assistance, education, health, and local public services. Establish referral mechanisms connecting beneficiaries with appropriate training providers and programmes, so that existing institutional touchpoints become opportunities for improving basic digital skills.
- Establish a national Skills Dashboard for the comprehensive monitoring of digital training and prioritise tracking key beneficiary groups identified as vulnerable to missing the 50% and 80% basic digital skills targets by 2030.
- Strengthen support measures for the general population and for groups identified as having limited basic digital skills by 2030.
- Expand large-scale digitalisation initiatives across schools, libraries, VET, private sector, and lifelong learning programs. Formalise partnerships with civil society organisations, libraries, public authorities, and SMEs to enhance outreach, with particular attention to rural and underserved areas.
- Establish clear and measurable links between each measure and the overarching objectives of the roadmap, including its expected contribution to the relevant national targets, impact indicators, timelines, and responsible institutions.
- Pair the digitisation of public services across the public sector, health, labor, and social protection with citizen-centric access, and ensure the provision of relevant data on the usage of these digital instruments.
- Introduce a sustained and visible policy for assessing and strengthening digital skills across public institutions. Conduct regular institutional and workforce-level assessments, publish comparable results, identify priority capability gaps, and require each institution to implement and report on a digital skills development plan for its employees.
- Ensure transparency by publishing disaggregated and regularly updated data for each measure through open-access dashboards.
- Institutionalise structured consultations with civil society and relevant stakeholders to guide implementation steps and identify areas where they can support public authorities.

B. Digitalisation of Public Services

1. Context and Priorities

The EU Digital Decade 2030 sets ambitious goals: **100% online availability of key public services, universal citizen access to digital identity, and universal access to medical records online.** According to DESI 2026, Romania is slowly progressing in ensuring digital public services for citizens (64.2% in 2025 vs. 62.7% in 2024) or access to health records (75.1% in both 2024 and 2025). The e-ID scheme notification lacks any progress report.

Availability of digital public services is the only category part of this objective in which Romania aims for full alignment with EU objectives. Romania has failed to define 2030 targets for either e-health or digital identity. For digital identity, one of the planned measures includes issuing electronic ID cards to at least 4.5 million citizens by the end of 2024 and a total of 8.5 million by mid-2026. The national memorandum for approving the roadmap includes a 100% e-ID coverage, but the objective is not included in the roadmap or the annual reports of the Commission. For e-health, DESI 2026 reports a 75.1% coverage rate in Romania, the same figure as in 2025, with virtually no change, but following a sharp increase from 58.6% in 2024. As previously mentioned in 2025, while the coverage rate suggests rapid progress, the figure seems very unlikely when comparing with publicly available data and the status of e-health records in Romania.

Historically, Romania has lagged behind in e-Government due to low political support, fragmented systems, limited interoperability, and low user uptake. Current national measures, largely financed under the NRRP or the MFF 2021-2027, include government cloud infrastructure, application migration to the cloud, rollout of the national digital identity system (ROeID), e-health platforms, interoperability hubs, the Single Digital Gateway (PCUE), and regional digital transformation initiatives. Few projects exist outside the on-going EU programs, with some delayed initiatives dating back even to the 2014–2020 funding period.

2. The Roadmap – Assessment of Alignment and Strength

Romania's measures show low-to-medium alignment with the EU digital objectives, focusing on cloud-enabled infrastructure, citizen-facing platforms, and sectoral digitalisation (eHealth, eID, environmental services). However, within this category, Romania has set a concrete target for only one of the three EU priorities. For digital public services, a 100% target is established; for eID, a numerical target is included within a specific measure (issuance of electronic IDs); but for eHealth, no target has been defined at all. For the latter, the challenge is not only the existence of a platform but also ensuring usability, timely updates, and real access for citizens and there is little evidence and clarity on how the process will work. A similar gap exists for the only stated target, the 100% access to digital public services. While the government cloud infrastructure and ROeID provide a solid foundation for secure service delivery, both remain critically delayed

and with the same usability challenges that may impact their capacities.

Some of the proposed measures lack specific budgets or timelines, with their completion vaguely extended to 2030. For instance, Measure 28: *Optimisation of Online Availability of Digital Public Services* is rather a legislative piece that sets standards for simplifying bureaucracy, without any other indicators or foreseen budgets. Similarly, Measure 27: Supporting the digital transformation of public services at the regional level simply lists various regional projects that are already embedded in the EU funding programs.

Despite introducing Measure 23: Operationalisation of the Digital Transformation Observatory to systematically collect data for guiding digital transformation and ensuring the Plan compliance with the Digital Decade objectives, there is no public data available confirming that this monitoring tool exists, rendering their commitment to tracking progress completely hollow.

3. Assessment of Implementation

The findings and concerns identified in the 2025 assessment remain broadly valid for the 2026 evaluation. Romania has continued to advance the implementation of several measures, with some projects, particularly those linked to the Recovery and Resilience Plan (RRP), moving faster than others. There are some positive developments and examples of progress, but their actual contribution to the digitalisation of public services remains difficult to assess. A major limitation is the lack of information on how digital platforms and services are actually used, and on how quickly they are integrating analogue or standalone public services. Public authorities often report platforms as functional or operational without providing sufficient evidence of which services are available in practice, how widely they are used, or whether they are delivering results for citizens.

Delays in service integration are also visible, alongside the cancellation of contracts for platforms considered important for interoperability, such as Measure 21. Similarly, Measure 23, the Digital Transformation Observatory, is reported as functional, but no publicly available data can be found through the platform to assess its practical use or contribution. In other areas, including the health sector, relevant implementation data are largely unavailable. In addition, some indicators reported as achieved remain substantially below the initial targets, including those related to digital IDs (Measure 20, with only 2,4 million issued by August 2026). As in 2025, the overall contribution of many measures to the EU Digital Decade objectives remains insufficiently articulated, making it difficult to determine whether implementation is translating into meaningful improvements in digital public services.

A key issue in the 2026 assessment is the limited availability of concrete metrics on the functioning and use of digital public services. For several platforms and infrastructure measures, reporting focuses on whether a system has been developed or declared operational,

rather than on how frequently it is used, by whom, or whether it has improved access to public services. This makes it difficult to assess the practical impact of implementation or to identify genuine good practices. The situation is particularly relevant when considering the Digital Decade indicators: the roadmap does not consistently provide indicators that allow progress to be measured directly against the EU targets, while some measures rely on indirect or enabling indicators. Consequently, even where implementation has advanced, it is often difficult to establish how this progress contributes to the Digital Decade objectives, including the target for 100% of key public services to be available online.

More fundamentally, the availability and quality of monitoring data remain insufficient to evaluate actual impact. While some measures report clear implementation milestones, there is often little information on user uptake, frequency of use, or outcomes for citizens and businesses. This is also the case for measures reported as completed or operational, where the absence of supporting usage or performance data limits the assessment of their practical effectiveness. Moreover, where indicators are significantly below the initial targets, it is not always clear what explains the gap or what corrective action is being taken. Compared with the Digital Decade indicators, the roadmap also remains short of sufficiently direct and comparable measures to demonstrate progress towards the EU-level objectives.

4. Assessment of Openness and Inclusiveness

The findings and concerns identified in the 2025 assessment remain broadly valid for the 2026 evaluation. Openness and transparency remain consistently limited. Although, similarly to all categories, program announcements and funding calls are published, primarily due to their reliance on EU financing, progress reporting remains inadequate. In most cases, measures report solely on implementation activities, such as hardware acquisitions or the establishment of service providers, while omitting usage indicators necessary to assess their actual contribution to digitalisation objectives. This results in substantial data gaps: public information on the status of measures, their alignment with overarching goals, and their completion rates is scarce or absent.

Equally, the process through which measures were

designed remains opaque. They appear to have been developed largely at government or interministerial level, with very limited citizen engagement. This is particularly problematic, since these measures are intended for direct citizen use. Creating a platform is insufficient if it is not accessible, user-friendly, and able to ensure real, reliable access. Public data are available for eID (mainly due to the public communications of the Directorate General for Personal Data Record under the Ministry of Internal Affairs) and Government cloud measures, but detailed breakdowns are largely missing. For eHealth, very little public data are accessible, being probably the sector with the most limited transparency. This makes it difficult to assess progress, usability, and the actual impact of the measures.

A major flaw remains that all projects are measured only by their availability (i.e. existing platforms) while omitting usability and impact data. There is a systemic failure to report metrics such as usage rates, adoption figures, or citizen satisfaction, leaving the user experience and accessibility perspective, which is essential for accurately measuring real-world impact, entirely absent.

5. Conclusions on Progress

Romania continues to fall behind in deploying core digital public services. Crucially, the absence of evaluation metrics precludes an accurate assessment of these platforms' effectiveness. While some foundational platforms have been developed, the overall process seems fragmented and modestly managed. The country's absence of national targets and a lack of effective monitoring mean it risks falling short of the EU's 2030 digital objectives. To realise their intended impact, all these platforms must adhere to user-centric design principles, featuring intuitive and accessible interfaces. A commitment to user-friendly design is not merely a technical preference, it is essential for driving high rates of citizen adoption and ensuring that digital services are not only functional but also actively and effectively used by the public. Without this focus, even well-funded digital infrastructure will fail to close the digital divide.

Romania may only partially comply with these targets, particularly those related to e-Health, or it may report having the platforms established by 2030, but without actual impact as navigating through them will be difficult for the general population.

6. Recommendations

- Clarify targets, timelines, responsibilities, and measurable adoption KPIs for all EU digital objectives.
- Clarify how the related measures and projects support the EU 2030 priorities.
- Prioritise public data on the integration of eHealth systems, eID and digital services and publication of usage statistics.
- Develop and maintain a transparent public dashboard mapping all public services associated with the key life events covered by the Digital Decade framework. For each service, identify the responsible institution, current level of digital

- maturity and sophistication, implementation status, expected timeline, and relevant usage and adoption indicators. The dashboard should enable progress to be tracked over time, strengthen institutional accountability, and clearly demonstrate how the digitalisation of individual services contributes to Romania's Digital Decade targets.
- Improve user-centric design, accessibility, and mobile interfaces and engage citizens in feedback loops to boost adoption and usability.
- Formalise structured partnerships and consultations with civil society and other stakeholders to guide implementation and monitoring of the data.

C. Digital Transformation of Businesses

1. Context and Priorities

The EU Digital Decade 2030 framework sets ambitious targets for the Digital Transformation of Businesses priority: by 2030, 75% of companies should adopt cloud computing, AI, and big data; 90% of SMEs should reach at least basic digital intensity; and Europe should grow scale-ups and finance to double EU Unicorns. Romania's roadmap sets, as in the case of Digital Skills priority, lower goals: 40% of companies using cloud, 10% using AI, 15% using big data. Additionally, the former Ministry of Economy, Entrepreneurship and Tourism, now the Ministry of Economy, Digitalisation, Entrepreneurship and Tourism (MEDAT), included in the plan that 75% of SMEs should achieve basic digital intensity, and an innovation ecosystem with 5,000 innovative & digital SMEs, 4 unicorns, and 2% of GDP from innovation should be in place.

Currently, Romania lags behind the EU average in all the key digital areas described above. According to the roadmap, cloud services are used by only 11% of enterprises (EU average: 34%). Adoption of Artificial Intelligence among SMEs is just 1% (EU average: 8%). Big Data use among Romanian SMEs stands at 5% (EU average: 14%). Finally, 53% of SMEs have a basic level of digital intensity (EU average: 69%). The DESI 2026 report indicates some increases for AI (3.1% in 2024 vs. 5.2% in 2025), Cloud adoption (15.5% in 2024, with no 2025 data available and 22.1% in 2026). However, these figures continue to be highly inconsistent, as is the case also for the use of Data Analytics use, showing 21.9% in 2024 and 35.1% in 2025 and compared to the 5% cited in the initial roadmap baseline scenario and 15% as the 2030 target.

To achieve its key objectives, Romania has proposed only four national-level measures, designed to be coordinated by MEDAT and include: an online platform for issuing business licenses, digitalising the ministry's e-archive, and two funding schemes, Start-Up Nation and the Women Entrepreneurs program financed from the state budget. It is worth noting the absence of any reference to fiscal policies favorable to digitalisation within the Plan.

The remaining measures are regional, implemented through the Regional Development Agencies, broadly described in general. Although most measures focus on business digitalisation, ranging from support for employees, hardware acquisitions, funding schemes to the creation of collaborative digital platforms, many projects overlap with the other priorities, such as digital training programs for students or the general population, funding digital educational services for public authorities, etc. This again highlights the roadmap internal inconsistencies: most "measures" are, in fact, standalone projects, with little clarity on how they correlate and contribute to the broader objectives and mix between the priorities.

While decentralising efforts across regional agencies could, in theory, improve outreach and targeting, the report does not explain how these fragmented measures will work together to meet the roadmap's

overarching goals. Their effectiveness depends on strong coordination, transparency, and inclusiveness, elements that are currently weak or absent. The national measures are overly broad and only partially address the EU digital objectives. Crucially, several key areas, such as the uptake of AI, big data, and cloud computing, are completely ignored and have no dedicated measures.

2. Assessment of Alignment and Strength

Romania's measures show low-to-medium alignment with EU priorities, with the national targets remaining far below EU benchmarks. The measures are described in general terms, focusing on supporting the digitalisation of businesses, yet they do not clearly specify how they will promote the adoption of cloud services, artificial intelligence, or big data, the key priorities of the plan. This creates inconsistencies between the national roadmap, which sets out specific objectives, despite their less ambitious approach, and the measures themselves, which rely heavily on generic funding schemes or programs that promote digitalisation at large. These schemes may contribute to overall digitalisation but seem mostly oriented toward basic digital skills, particularly the national roadmap's target of 75% of SMEs achieving a basic level of digital intensity.

Most measures, drawn from various EU funding streams, allocate resources for business digitalisation and poorly address the adoption of cloud, AI, or big data. Regional-level measures support SME digitalisation through funding, training, consultancy, testing facilities, digital services and innovation networks. However, their support for digitalisation is often framed in broad terms, without clearly defining the technologies or levels of adoption that businesses are expected to achieve. This makes it difficult to assess whether the funding is actually contributing to the specific Digital Decade ambition of increasing the technological sophistication of European businesses, rather than simply increasing their general access to digital tools.

Moreover, many of these measures overlap with other Digital Decade objectives, particularly the Basic Digital Skills target. Across several regions, measures such as Support for Increasing Digital Skills among Students in the North-West Region or Digital Innovation Ecosystem Events focus primarily on skills development, awareness-raising or ecosystem-building rather than directly supporting business digitalisation. This overlap blurs the distinction between the objectives pursued by the different measures and creates uncertainty about how regional hubs contribute to specific Digital Decade targets.

Lastly, most of these measures lack clear and measurable implementation indicators. In many cases, the available documentation does not specify quantifiable targets or outcome indicators that would allow progress to be assessed against the objectives of the measure.

In conclusion, while Romania's approach broadly aligns with EU priorities, its comparatively low targets, reliance on fragmented funding, and limited focus on the adoption of advanced technologies significantly weaken the overall strength and credibility of the measures.

3. Assessment of Implementation

The Digitalisation of Businesses pillar shows a clear disconnect between the Digital Decade indicators and the measures outlined in the roadmap. Only four measures are currently identified, with a few additional initiatives included in regional programmes, but these are not sufficiently aligned with the Digital Decade targets and indicators.

Our 2026 assessment is broadly similar to that of 2025. Some programmes have been restarted (Start-up Romania, Femeia Antreprenor), and several platforms are, at least in theory, operational, although some seem to have been working as long as the EU-funded program was available. However, the lack of clearly defined metrics, limited information on actual usage and usability, and the absence of qualitative assessments make it difficult to evaluate their effectiveness and impact. As a result, transparency remains low and it is still challenging to determine whether the measures are effectively contributing to progress against the Digital Decade objectives.

The regional programs, which are the ones driving this objective, have a partially adequate implementation, but the available reporting makes it difficult to assess their actual progress and impact. Reporting mainly focuses on outputs, such as the number of SMEs supported, employees trained, events organised, services delivered and providers mapped, rather than on whether these activities have actually increased SME digitalisation, technology adoption or innovation. This is visible in the North-East, where over 600 employees were said to be trained and over 180 companies supported, and the West, where 127 SMEs received EDIH support and 196 projects were submitted under the PR West digitalisation call. While these numbers may look good on paper, little information is available on what the support actually entailed, which technologies were adopted, or whether the interventions resulted in measurable improvements in firms' digital capabilities. Consequently, it is difficult to determine the real impact of these programmes.

At the same time, consistent 2025 and 2026 data and clear outcome indicators are missing, particularly for the North-West, Centre, and South-Muntenia/

Bucharest-Ilfov Regions. As a result, even where implementation activities are reported, it is difficult to determine how much progress has been made towards the measures' objectives or their contribution to the Digital Decade targets.

4. Assessment of Openness and Inclusiveness

In terms of transparency, while public calls and award lists are available as the plan measures are in general EU- or national-funded calls from other funding streams, there is a lack of data on the actual adoption of key technologies like cloud, AI, and big data.

As in the previous year, the main improvement identified concerns the timely response to FOIA requests and, in some cases, a greater willingness of public authorities to provide information when approached directly. This was observed among several Regional Development Agencies and the Ministry of Investments and European Projects. However, these instances remain limited and uneven. Regional Development Agencies were among the few authorities to provide some feedback following CRPE's publication of the centralised mapping of measures in 2025, but this should be regarded as an exception rather than evidence of a broader improvement in transparency and information-sharing across the institutions involved.

Regarding inclusiveness, programs aimed at women entrepreneurs, start-ups, and regional EDIHs have the potential to narrow certain gaps, but the plan falls short in providing relevant general data on the objective or addressing diversity indicators and the disparities between urban and rural areas. Regarding openness, there are minimal indications of any public engagement extending beyond the restricted framework established for the entire roadmap.

5. Conclusions on Progress

Romania's low national targets and a lack of adoption-focused monitoring mean the country risks falling short of EU 2030 objectives. The current approach seems to prioritise broad funding schemes for business digitalisation, neglecting to address the specific sectoral indicators within this priority, especially AI, big data and cloud computing. Both national and regional projects, despite their potential to advance digitalisation generally, are broadly described and appear to be unrelated to the specific objectives of the EU Digital Decade.

6. Recommendations

- Strengthen the coherence between regional and national measures by clarifying the links between them and identifying areas where alignment or complementarity is currently missing.
- Strengthen the correlation with the EU Digital Decade Programme by ensuring that national and regional measures are explicitly linked to the EU's established digital targets and objectives.
- Shift the focus from merely contract signing to measurable outcomes in technology adoption for businesses, especially on cloud, AI and big data.

- Embed cloud, AI, big data, and cybersecurity adoption into the funding programs meant for businesses rather than general digitalisation measures.
- Provide targeted incentives to encourage businesses to adopt advanced digital technologies.
- Ensure transparency by publishing disaggregated and regularly updated adoption KPIs through open-access dashboards at national and regional levels.
- Formalise structured partnerships and consultations with civil society, businesses, and other stakeholders to guide implementation and monitoring of the data.

D. Infrastructure

(Secure and sustainable digital infrastructures)

1. Context and Priorities

The EU Digital Decade 2030 sets ambitious targets for secure and sustainable digital infrastructure: universal gigabit connectivity, full 5G coverage in populated areas, doubling the EU's share of global semiconductor production, deployment of 10,000 climate-neutral edge computing nodes, and the development of Europe's first quantum-accelerated computer.

Romania's commitments fall significantly short of these benchmarks. Operator forecasts suggest only 62% 5G coverage by 2030, far below the EU objective of 100%. The country has no semiconductor production capacity, relying solely on the IPCEI-MECT initiative which Romania is part of. Edge nodes are expected to grow from 2 in 2022 to 113 by 2030, though this figure is mentioned descriptively in the roadmap, rather than set as an official target. No plans exist for quantum computing.

Current data on network infrastructure shows Romania significantly outperforms the EU average in fixed connectivity, with Fixed Very High Capacity Network (VHCN) coverage at 96.5% (compared to the EU's 85.5%) and Fibre to the Premises (FTTP) coverage at 96.3% (vs. the EU's 74.1%). **However, Romania lags far behind in mobile infrastructure,** with overall 5G coverage standing at only 59.3% compared to the EU's 96.8%.

Progress is visible in both fixed connectivity and mobile infrastructure. However, the data on edge nodes raise concerns regarding reliability and comparability. Under the 2024 methodology, Romania's estimate was 11 edge nodes, up from 2 in 2022. Under the revised methodology used for 2025, the estimate increased to 252, compared with 7,451 across the EU. These substantial discrepancies and methodological changes make it difficult to assess Romania's actual progress and suggest that the available data should be treated with caution.

2. Assessment of Alignment and Strength

Romania's digital strategy remains largely unaligned with the Secure and Sustainable Digital Infrastructures priority objectives, as the measures included in the national roadmap focus almost exclusively on a single priority area: Connectivity. Most of these initiatives are limited to preparatory steps, such as establishing tariffs, adopting regulations, or laying the groundwork for future investments, rather than delivering concrete progress toward 2030 targets. This narrow focus leaves major gaps in Romania's contribution to the EU's broader digital transformation agenda.

Critically, there are no measures addressing advanced digital infrastructure such as edge computing, edge nodes, or semiconductors, areas that are central

to the EU's ambition of securing technological competitiveness. The absence of such measures not only undermines Romania's capacity to align with European objectives but also risks deepening the digital divide between Romania and other Member States that are advancing on these fronts.

The roadmap defines only five core measures under this priority, all centred on either expanding 5G or improving network access. These include:

- Reducing TEDIH tariffs to improve access to physical infrastructure.
- Mapping Very High-Capacity Networks (VHCN) to identify underserved areas.
- Ensuring efficient spectrum allocation.
- Securing 5G networks in line with EU guidelines.
- Setting technical standards to strengthen resilience and scalability.

3. Assessment of Implementation

The assessment made in 2025 remains valid in 2026. While the five national measures are now either partially or fully implemented, as reported by the National Authority for Management and Regulation in Communications of Romania, their implementation continues to focus primarily on preparatory steps, such as establishing tariffs, mapping networks, updating physical infrastructure norms, and introducing security standards for 5G networks. These measures provide a foundation for future investments and projects but only partially support Romania's 2030 Secure and Sustainable Digital Infrastructure targets.

Although most of the measures have been implemented, they have not translated into sufficient progress against the relevant Digital Decade indicators. In addition, there has been no measurable progress from 2025 to 2026, notably for 5G coverage (Measure 33) and the European Digital Innovation Hubs/TEDIH-related measure (Measure 31). Mobile network performance also continues to lag behind the Digital Decade targets, while there are limited or no concrete measures addressing several of the other strategic priorities.

Overall, the conclusions of the 2025 assessment continue to apply in 2026: implementation of the national measures has advanced, but this has not yet resulted in commensurate progress towards the Digital Decade 2030 targets.

4. Assessment of Openness, Inclusiveness, and Transparency

Although the roadmap's formal measures are in place and provide a certain level of transparency, the overall process remains weak in terms of inclusiveness and public consultation. Inclusiveness is even less developed. Public engagement and awareness-raising initiatives are scarce, and it is unclear to what extent

civil society and other stakeholders are meaningfully involved in the design or monitoring of the measures. Moreover, as previously underlined, the measures themselves do not clearly explain how they will contribute to achieving Romania's national targets or the broader EU digital objectives. Without stronger mechanisms for inclusiveness, accountability, and clarity, the roadmap risks remaining a technical compliance exercise rather than serving as a genuine strategy for advancing Romania's digital transformation.

5. Conclusions on Progress

The absence of clear national targets and ambitions for semiconductor production, edge nodes and the adoption of edge computing are significant challenges that, combined with the lack of quantum computing or semiconductors initiatives, suggest Romania will fail to meet the EU 2030 digital ambitions. Compounding this, the country continues to lag behind in 5G connectivity, a key issue that will perpetuate and even widen the digital gap. Ensuring connectivity and a secure 5G rollout remain the critical national bottlenecks.

6. Recommendations

- Establish clear timelines and monitoring frameworks for spectrum allocation and secure 5G deployment and explain how they fit the general digital objectives.
- Define targets and measures for semiconductor production, quantum computing and edge computing nodes.
- Increase ambition across all digital infrastructure

priorities and clearly explain how each measure contributes to the broader national and EU digital objectives.

- Prioritise rural and underserved areas through targeted funding and incentives.
- Require operators to report regularly on deployment progress.
- Enhance overall transparency by providing regularly updated, user-friendly dashboards for all measures.

Conclusions and Recommendations: Final evaluation and Forward-thinking Proposals

R1. Revise and update the roadmap

Revise the roadmap through a genuine public process, involving civil society, business, academia and other relevant stakeholders, rather than treating the revision as an administrative exercise. As previously underlined, the process should be anchored in a clear governance structure coordinated or supported by the Chancellery of the Prime Minister and the Ministry of Economy, Digitalisation, Entrepreneurship and Tourism, with the Authority for the Digitalisation of Romania acting as the operational lead and empowered with the political support necessary to set and deliver on more ambitious goals. The roadmap revision should also feature open calls for public input, thematic consultations, and the publication of feedback summaries, establishing a transparent, participatory model for digital policy-making.

R2. Publish an interim evaluation of the roadmap.

Publish an interim evaluation of the roadmap and open access to information on the current implementation status of all projects and measures, especially given the end of a critical funding stream, the Recovery and Resilience Plan. The independent evaluation should distinguish between measures that are completed, ongoing, delayed, ineffective or no longer relevant. It should also assess not only financial execution and project delivery but whether interventions are producing the intended changes in digital skills, business digitalisation, connectivity, public services and other Digital Decade outcomes.

R3. Introduce an outcome- and impact-oriented framework linking objectives, targets, measures, indicators and projects.

The roadmap should evolve from a collection of predominantly EU-funded projects into a coherent national framework for achieving Romania's Digital Decade objectives. This requires a hierarchical planning framework linking each project and measure to specific objectives, indicators and national targets, while distinguishing between activities, outputs, outcomes and longer-term impact. All future digital projects financed through EU or national programmes should be required to include a Digital Decade compliance statement demonstrating their expected contribution to the 2030 targets.

R4. Introduce intermediate milestones and publish an alignment matrix.

Establish clear national targets with intermediate milestones for 2027 and 2030 (if missing) under each Digital Decade pillar, tailored to Romania's specific

challenges and opportunities. These targets should be supported by measurable indicators to enable effective monitoring and progress evaluation. To ensure policy coherence, develop an alignment matrix linking each Digital Decade pillar with relevant strategies, programs, and policy instruments, providing a clear framework for coordination and accountability.

R5. Enhance transparency

Enhance transparency by committing to the regular publication of information on all projects and measures, ideally every six months, including implementation status, funding, responsible institutions and results. Develop a public digital dashboard integrating all roadmap measures, projects and indicators, with disaggregated data available. Link the dashboard to open data APIs, enabling researchers, journalists, and civic organisations to analyse implementation in real time. Require institutions contributing to the roadmap to update progress quarterly, ensuring continuity, consistency, and public accountability.

R6. Improve implementation capacity and ensure political support.

Clarify the responsibilities of all institutions involved in implementing the roadmap and ensure they fully understand their roles within the Digital Decade framework. Strengthen coordination among these institutions, supported by adequate resources and sustained political commitment from the General Secretariat of the Government and the Chancellery of the Prime Minister.

Designate clear focal points within each line ministry and relevant agency responsible for collecting and transmitting progress data to the Authority for Digitalization of Romania. These Digital Decade focal points should be formally appointed through ministerial orders, ensuring continuity and accountability in reporting, monitoring, and coordination. Establish a standard reporting template and a fixed quarterly submission schedule to support data consistency and enable ADR to maintain an accurate and up-to-date overview of implementation progress, addressing long-standing gaps observed in DESI reporting and current roadmap monitoring.

Consider establishing Digital Transformation Units within key ministries responsible for the Digital Decade 2030 objectives and hold annual progress reviews at government and parliamentary levels to reinforce accountability. Establish a biannual progress report on the roadmap's status to be formally presented and debated during government meetings. These measures will ensure high-level political accountability and enhance the visibility of the Digital Decade's implementation progress.

R7. Institutionalise accountability mechanisms for the Authority for the Digitalisation of Romania

Require the Authority for the Digitalisation of Romania to better define, assume and disclose its responsibilities in coordinating the Digital Decade roadmap, including the departments in charge and its overall mandate. Publicly disclose key responsibilities in coordinating, monitoring and publishing data. Enforce publishing an annual comprehensive implementation report detailing measures taken, progress on all indicators, monitoring methodology and identified delays or risks. Introduce an independent audit or peer-review mechanism every two years to assess the coordination performance and the accuracy of reported data.

R8. Establish a formal Digital Decade Forum to ensure transparency and inclusive coordination.

Create a Digital Decade Forum with strong political backing, bringing together government institutions, businesses, academia, and civil society, under the coordination of the Ministry of Economy, Digitalisation, Entrepreneurship and Tourism and the Chancellery of the Prime Minister. Mandate the Forum to publish annual monitoring reports summarising progress, identifying bottlenecks, and proposing solutions. The Forum should ensure representation from regional and local levels and act as an essential mechanism for ensuring transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement in implementing Romania's digital transformation roadmap.

R9. Prioritize citizen-centric digital transformation.

Ensure that all digitalization efforts, covering skills, businesses, infrastructure, and public services, are designed with citizens and businesses at the center: accessible, user-friendly, mobile-ready, and focused on practical needs rather than purely administrative or technical requirements. Implement pilot tests, collect usage data, and establish feedback mechanisms for all major systems, making this information publicly available to inform ongoing improvements. Publish adoption and satisfaction data, and create a permanent national feedback mechanism for citizens and businesses.

R10. Establish a sustainable national financing framework.

Establish a sustainable national financing framework and plan for the post-2028 period. Complement EU funding with dedicated and predictable national funding to increase the scale, continuity and long-term sustainability of Digital Decade measures beyond individual EU funding cycles. Identify new sources of financing and ensure that digital priorities are reflected in the next EU funding cycle, including through early alignment with the National and Regional Partnership Plans and other future EU funding instruments. Future financing decisions should be based on demonstrated impact and contribution to the national Digital Decade targets, rather than primarily on funding availability or absorption capacity. The Commission has explicitly linked the future of Digital Decade investments to the next MFF and the preparation of these national and regional plans.

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Annex: Table of Measures Included in the Plan, with Detailed Explanations



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