

---

## Weekly Policy News Summary

---

Year 2018 – week 15

---

### **Declaration on the establishment of a European Blockchain Partnership**

22 European countries have signed a Declaration on the establishment of a European Blockchain Partnership. The Partnership will be a vehicle for cooperation amongst MS to exchange experience and expertise in technical and regulatory fields and prepare for the launch of EU-wide blockchain applications across the DSM for the benefit of the public and private sectors. The technology is already being successfully tested, mostly in financial services, and will become more operational and integrated into increasing number of digital services, such as regulatory reporting, energy and logistics in the coming years. The decentralised and collaborative nature of blockchain and its applications allows exploiting the full scale of the DSM from the outset. Close cooperation between MS can help avoiding fragmented approaches and can ensure interoperability and wider deployment of blockchain-based services and will contribute to the creation of an enabling environment, in full compliance with EU laws as it was stated that in the future, all public services will use blockchain technology.

On the same occasion of Digital day, 25 European countries signed a Declaration of cooperation on Artificial Intelligence (AI).

### **New 5G cross-border corridors for connected and automated driving**

Several MS took important steps to extend the 5G European network by signing regional agreements on 5G corridors thus making Europe the biggest experiment area rolling out the 5G technology. There are already several important initiatives in place: France, Germany and Luxembourg have announced a joint corridor between Luxembourg, Metz and Merzig; followed by Norway, Finland and Sweden with the E8 corridor between Tromsø (Norway) and Oulu (Finland) and the E18 corridor between Helsinki, Stockholm and Oslo; the Netherlands and Belgium join in with the Rotterdam – Antwerp - Eindhoven corridor. The recent further progress is: Spain and Portugal signed a Letter of Intent to have two joint corridors between Vigo and Porto and between Evora and Mérida, allowing connected automated driving to be tested across borders; Bulgaria, Greece and Serbia are working together on the corridor Thessaloniki – Sofia – Belgrade; In addition, Italy and the three presidents of Euroregion Tirol-Südtirol-Trentino have confirmed their intention to work, in cooperation with other interested MS, on the development of the 5G Corridor on the Brenner pass motorway which has traffic of over 60 million vehicles per year.

### **Future of the cohesion policy**

The Council adopted without discussion conclusions on the delivery and implementation of cohesion policy post-2020. The conclusions call for simpler rules at EU and national level, greater responsibility for the member states in the implementation process, and early preparation of the new programmes in order to ensure a smooth transition to the next programming period. Strategic context and priorities of cohesion policy post-2020, the type of regions to be covered, categories of regions and co-financing rates, the ways to make cohesion policy more effective in the next period, and speed up its implementation are the key issues of the decision.

---