Summer 2026

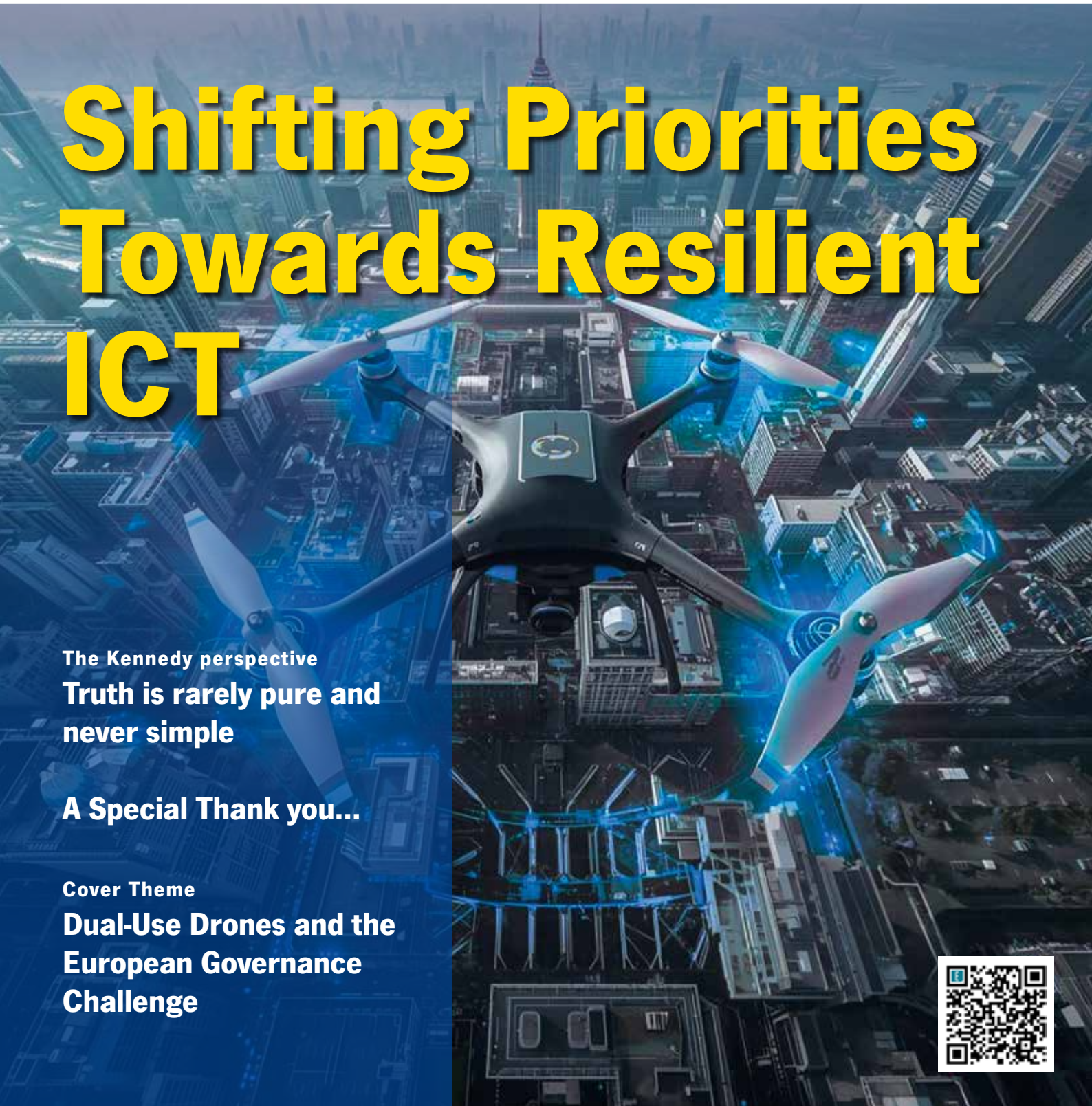
EURESCOM message

The magazine for telecom insiders

CELTIC News 1/2026

CELTIC-NEXT

Shifting Priorities Towards Resilient ICT



The Kennedy perspective

Truth is rarely pure and never simple

A Special Thank you...

Cover Theme

Dual-Use Drones and the European Governance Challenge

Join the Industry-Driven Research Programme of next-generation communications for a secured, trusted, and sustainable digital society

CELTIC-NEXT Autumn Call 2026 for Project Proposals – Deadline: 23 October 2026

Here is the opportunity to participate in CELTIC-NEXT, the industry-driven European ICT and telecommunications research programme under the umbrella of EUREKA. Do not miss the submission deadline for the next call for project proposals, on the 23 October 2026!

CELTIC-NEXT projects are collaborative private-public partnership R&D projects. All EUREKA member countries and associated countries can financially support them. More information on public funding and national contacts per country can be found on the CELTIC-NEXT Public Authorities Website. Please talk to your national contact early in the process.

Easy proposal process

Preparing and submitting a CELTIC-NEXT project proposal is easy. Just register via the CELTIC-NEXT online proposal tool, fill in the Web forms, and upload your proposal in pdf. Access to the proposal tool and to a proposal template is available via our Call Information page (https://www.celticnext.eu/call-information).

Benefits of participating in CELTIC-NEXT

- You are free to define your project proposal according to your own research interests and priorities.
- Your proposals are not bound by any call texts, as long as it is within the ICT/telecommunications area see: CELTIC-NEXT Scope and Research Areas.
- CELTIC-NEXT projects are close to the market and have a track record of exploiting their results soon after the end of the project.
- High-quality proposals have an excellent chance of receiving funding, with an average success rate higher than 50%.
- The results of the evaluation will be known by **January 2027**.

If you have any questions or need help, do not hesitate to contact us; we would be pleased to support you.

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Dear readers,

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In the rapidly evolving geopolitical and technological landscape, resilience has moved from a technical consideration to a strategic imperative. This shift is reflected in the recent announcement by the European Commission, which unveiled a €115 million AGILE programme in March 2026—an ambitious initiative designed to accelerate disruptive defence innovation across Europe. By targeting technologies such as artificial intelligence, quantum systems, and drones, and by empowering SMEs, start-ups, and scale-ups, AGILE signals a decisive move: innovation must not only be fast, but deployable, scalable, and resilient in real-world conditions.

This evolving priority is at the heart of this edition of Eurescom Message. It brings together a spectrum of perspectives that reflect sector expertise, practical insight, and long-term impact. From governance challenges to architectural transformations, the focus is clear—Europe's ICT future must be robust, adaptive, and secure by design.

The **Kennedy's perspective** forces us to reflect on how we interpret reality, often limiting our ability to see beyond personal bias. In today's digital age, this challenge is amplified, highlighting the urgent need for more resilient and trustworthy ICT systems.

The invited article on the **Dual-Use Drones and the European Governance Challenge** alerts on the rising drone incursions across Europe and reveals a new dual-use threat built on civilian ICT infrastructure, blurring civil-military boundaries and exposing governance gaps. While strengthening resilient networks, spectrum management, and integrated 5G/6G capabilities is now critical for security and societal stability.

A glimpse from the **2nd EU-Japan Digital Week highlights shifting priorities and focus towards dual use technologies and even defence** – policy workshop highlighted growing geopolitical risks and the need for resilient, trusted connectivity. Discussions focused on AI, quantum, and space technologies, emphasising joint R&D, interoperable standards, secure supply chains, and strengthened cooperation for a rules-based digital order.

At Mobile World Congress 2026, the European Commission launched **EURO-3C (€75M)** to build a federated Telco-Edge-Cloud infrastructure, strengthening sovereignty and resilience. This reflects shifting ICT priorities toward interoperable, secure, AI-enabled ecosystems that address fragmentation, support critical sectors, and ensure scalable, trusted digital infrastructure across Europe and Eurescom is committed to contribute to this strategically important initiative. With our long-standing experience in organising and supporting large-scale European research and innovation programmes, we ensure the smooth implementation and effective operational set-up of EURO-3C.

European policy and cybersecurity authorities have increasingly advocated for hybrid cryptographic strategies that combine traditional and post-quantum algorithms. The Eurescom led, EU funded **FORTRESS project** directly addresses this strategic challenge by developing a scalable hybrid secure boot architecture designed for Europe's evolving digital infrastructure. By combining cryptographic research, and ecosystem collaboration, the project contributes to shaping secure and resilient European digital future.

The article on **Strengthening Europe's media sovereignty with the Future Media Initiative** presents the growing gap between content creation and platform control and how this is a core issue for European media sovereignty. This shift from content creation towards the control of digital infrastructure, data, and monetisation now requires resilient, European-led platforms, stronger innovation capacity, and coordinated investment to reduce dependency on non-European tech giants and safeguard democratic influence, competitiveness, and trusted information ecosystems in an increasingly platform-driven digital landscape.

This edition demonstrates, Europe is actively reshaping how it approaches ICT—prioritising resilience, integration, and long-term impact. In doing so, it reinforces a fundamental truth: **connectivity is never just infrastructure. It is a shared responsibility.**

This edition is Special as we extend our sincere appreciation to the Director of Eurescom for his outstanding leadership and long-standing dedication to Eurescom. Over the years, his vision, commitment, and strategic direction have played a pivotal role in shaping Eurescom into a respected and impactful organization within the telecommunications and research community. Through his guidance, the organisation has not only strengthened its position but also expanded its influence, fostering collaboration, innovation, and excellence across diverse initiatives. Beyond organisational success, his leadership has inspired colleagues, partners, and stakeholders alike, leaving a lasting impression on all who have had the privilege to work with him. As he steps into a new chapter, we warmly acknowledge the legacy he leaves behind—one defined by growth, resilience, and achievement. We wish him continued good health, happiness, and a fulfilling future, with ample time to enjoy new opportunities and personal pursuits.

With this edition of **Eurescom's Message** we continue our mission to reach the ICT European community for sharing insights and perspectives that shape the future of connectivity. We warmly invite your **feedback and ideas** for upcoming issues. Write to us at *message@eurescom.eu* and let us know which topics you'd like us to explore next. Your input helps us make each edition more relevant, inspiring, and impactful.

Enjoy reading!

EVENTS CALENDAR

29 June 2026
IEEE NetSoft Workshop
Berlin, Germany
https://netsoft2026.ieee-netsoft.org/

8 – 10 September 2026
Berlin 6G Conference 2026
Berlin, Germany
https://www.6g-plattform.de/berlin-6g-conference/

4 – 9 October 2026
European Microwave Week (EuMW 2026)
Excel, London, UK
https://www.eumw.eu/general-information/

21 – 22 October 2026
Techritory Forum 2026
Riga, Latvia
https://techritory.com/

26 – 27 November 2026
14th FOKUS FUSECO Forum
Berlin, Germany
https://www.fokus.fraunhofer.de/en/ngni/events/fuseco-forum_2026.html

2 – 3 November 2026
NEM Summit 2026
Valencia, Spain
https://nem-initiative.org/events/nem-summit/

1st December 2026
OPTI-6G Project Final Event
Brunel, United Kingdom
https://opti-6g.sns-ju.eu/

7 – 11 December 2026
IEEE GLOBECOM 2026
Macau S.A.R., China
https://globecom2026.ieee-globecom.org/

SNAPSHOTS

CELTIC-NEXT Proposers' Brokerage Day in Vienna: Christoph Lipps (Senior Researcher at DFKI) presenting the success stories of the CELTIC-NEXT Flagship Projects SENDATE, AI-NET, and SUSTAINET

At the CELTIC-NEXT Proposers' Brokerage Day in Vienna, discussions centred on how ongoing collaborative research is progressing towards concrete market applications. Within the Business Impact Session, Christoph Lipps from DFKI presented the results of the flagship projects SENDATE, AI-NET and SUSTAINET. These examples illustrated how coordinated efforts across industry and research are already contributing to developments in secure connectivity, sustainability and next-generation digital services.

More broadly, the event provided a structured platform for exchange between stakeholders across the CELTIC-NEXT community. The programme included 14 formal presentations across welcome remarks, keynote and national framework sessions, contributions from 11 public authorities and funding bodies, and 15 project pitches presented during the dedicated pitching sessions. Together with the follow-up consortium building meetings, this level of participation underlined the role of CELTIC-NEXT as an effective framework for fostering collaboration and preparing the next generation of transnational R&D projects.

Further information
- *https://www.celticnext.eu/proposers-brokerage-day-30-january-2026-in-vienna/*
- See the CELTIC-NEWS 01/2026 page *9*

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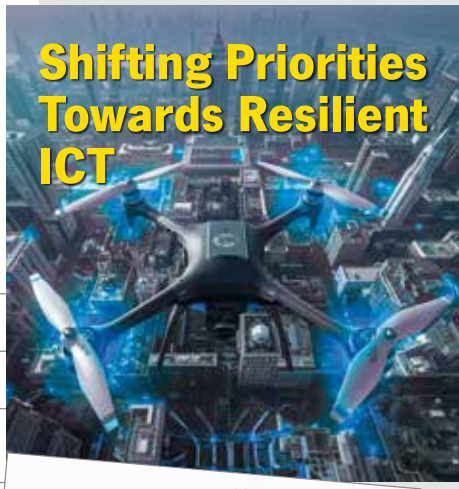

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Truth is rarely pure and never simple

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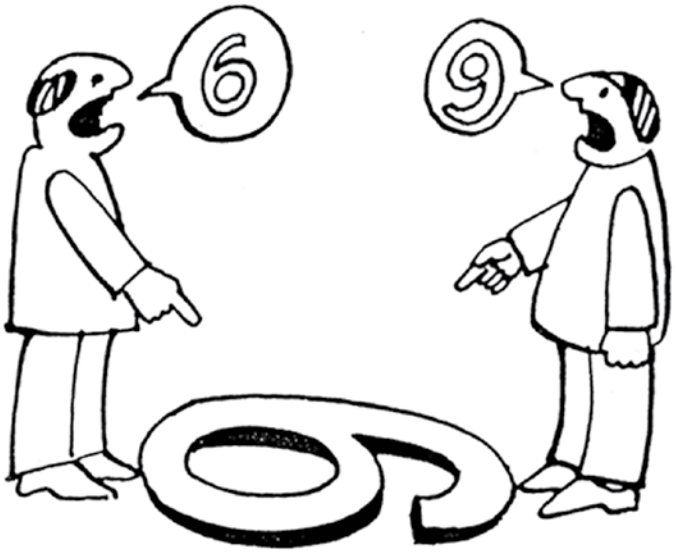

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The funny thing about perspectives is that they are often totally dependent on the viewpoint. For example; my bias about traffic behaviour has a completely different target if I take my bicycle to work compared to when I drive – as a driver I hate those cyclists who go through red lights and tiny gaps in the traffic - but once I get on the bike, it is those selfish motorists who are the evil ones!! The point here is that you tend to judge the scenario from the circumstances you are in and from this point of view it is very difficult to appreciate the position of others.

The reason for thinking about this is that we have, with the ICT/Internet revolution, enabled a generation of people with little or no real-life experience who have decided they want to make a career out of telling others how to think. They have learned that they get the most air time by being polarised, even radical, in their statements. And the evil in our open internet ICT world is that algorithms, originally designed to allow you to see more of what you like, are now becoming proactive disseminators of the hate messages on the basis you liked one so here are more. The sad point is that many of the instigators are actually apolitical – but they are happy to use an extreme view to sell their message, advertise their products or even spread their propaganda. This is why we need a more resilient ICT structure. We need to see who is talking, who is paying, know if it is true and be able to stop the rot.

A good start

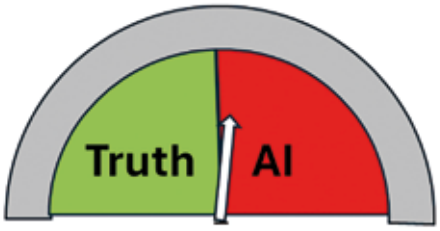
The Welsh parliament (yes, Wales has one!) has just passed a law to make it illegal for candidates to lie during Senedd elections. In this context they would have committed a criminal offence by lying. Now we know this will be difficult to implement in the real world – but if we look back to the Brexit referendum in the UK, the US presidential election and a few other votes around the world, we can immediately see that honesty has been compromised. The truth is not relevant for many modern-day politicians and they are actually winning by shouting lies long enough and loud enough so that people believe them. The new Welsh rule is a good start – but this rule should always apply. If a politician lies, or his team lie for him, then he should lose his right to represent people.

However, this is just a treatment for the crisis of confidence people have in politics nowadays and the overload of false and modified information we are seeing. We don't know who to trust any more.

Resilient ICT

The only way forward now is to build more resilient ICT systems. We need to evolve ICT systems that are more than just cybersecure. Stopping hackers is simple enough, but how do we stop the algorithms placing half truths in our inboxes, feeding our subconscious bias's? The answer is obviously first to ensure the digital infrastructure is secure so bad people just can't access it. But then we need to do a lot more to make sure content is verifiable. Finding out if something is real means we need to know who produced something, if that is a real person or a bot, and who paid for it.

To do this we will need a set of real-time tools to fact-check content. A well-trained AI system should be able to identify misinformation and mitigate the transmission of falsehoods even before we read them. The catch in this is whose definition of "well-trained" should we use?



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Epilogue

We have created an incredible communications infrastructure to disseminate knowledge as a great equaliser - but it is also being misused to disseminate disinformation. Generation Z are the internet generation – and have done great things – but we need Generation Alpha to do better now!

Further education

- "Truth is rarely pure and never simple" _ Oscar Wild, *The Importance of Being Earnest*

Dual-Use Drones and the European Governance Challenge

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A New Kind of Threat, Built on Civilian Infrastructure

Europe's airspace faces increasing pressure. Since September 2025, unidentified drone incursions over airports, military sites, energy facilities, and nuclear locations across multiple European countries have led to repeated shutdowns at Copenhagen, Munich, Oslo, and Liège. Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen called the Copenhagen incident[1] the most serious attack on Danish critical infrastructure to date. Germany's air navigation service provider reported 225 drone-related disruptions[2] in German airspace by December 2025. Drones have appeared over Belgium's Doel Nuclear Power Station, above Ramstein Air Base, and near military convoys in France. These are hybrid operations aimed at probing, disrupting, and intimidating below the level of armed conflict.

This is more than just an airspace security issue. It poses a governance challenge because both drones and counter-drone systems rely on the same civilian digital infrastructures, such as spectrum, Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS), mobile networks, cloud services, and edge computing, which support Europe's economy, public services, and critical infrastructure.

What makes this moment unique is the nature of the technology involved. The drones causing these disruptions mainly rely on civilian Information Communication Technology infrastructure: commercial radio frequencies, Global Positioning System (GPS) and GNSS for navigation, mobile networks for command and control, cloud computing for data processing, and AI software for autonomous flight and target recognition. Counter-drone systems reflect this dependence, using spectrum monitoring, sensor fusion, edge computing, and machine-learning algorithms for detection and neutralisation. Both the threat and the response are rooted in the same communications ecosystems that support everyday civilian life.

This exemplifies the dual-use challenge, namely that the ICT backbone of modern European society also forms the operational infrastructure of a new generation of aerial threats, as underlined in the European Commission's Action Plan[3] on Drone and Counter-Drone Security published in February 2026.

Blurring of Civil-Military Boundaries

The ongoing transformation extends far beyond isolated incursions. In the Russian conflict against Ukraine, drones have become the main tool for surveillance, targeting, and attrition. Over 819,000 video-confirmed[4] drone strikes were recorded in 2025. Ukraine's drone ecosystem has expanded rapidly, with official reports indicating very large-scale domestic[5] production and delivery volumes by late 2025. Russia crossed the 500-drone mark in a single operation in September 2025. These systems are assembled from widely available commercial components and operate through civilian connectivity infrastructure. In this context, innovation cycles have shortened from decades to weeks, with new drone variants moving from prototype to battlefield deployment in days.

There is also an emerging drone-AI nexus, where inexpensive airframes converge with adaptive software for navigation, targeting, and coordination, which accelerates battlefield decision-making and expands operational scale. Machine vision, route optimisation, and autonomous swarm coordination already influence how drones are flown and how targets are prioritised. Even when human operators remain formally "in the loop", their role is increasingly supervisory rather than deliberative. Importantly, accountability is fragmented across military, civilian, and private actors, and existing legal frameworks struggle to keep pace.

For the ICT community, the key message is clear. The technologies driving this transformation, from AI chips, software-defined radios, GPS modules, edge processors, to cloud platforms, are the same ones at the core of Europe's civilian digital economy. The drone-AI connection also relies on the infrastructure that European citizens, businesses, and institutions depend on daily. Consequently, disruptions to this infrastructure, whether through electronic warfare, cyberattacks, or spectrum interference, ripple across civilian and defence areas simultaneously.

Why 6G Matters for Drone Resilience

The development of 6G and next-generation network architectures presents a clear opportunity to integrate resilience into European

ICT infrastructure by design. But the governance problem is immediate rather than distant. Many of the vulnerabilities exposed by dual-use drones already sit within today's mobile networks, GNSS dependencies, cloud services, and spectrum environments. Europe needs a bridge between near-term hardening and longer-term 6G design choices. 5G-Advanced (Release 18), expected from 2025, already incorporates improved positioning accuracy, AI-native network management, and enhanced sensing capabilities that could serve as interim resilience measures before full 6G deployment. The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) has named the next generation of mobile technology "IMT-2030"[6], with key features including AI-powered communications, integrated sensing and communication (ISAC), and widespread connectivity. Several of these features are directly relevant to addressing the dual-use drone challenge.

Spectrum resilience is perhaps the most immediate concern. The electromagnetic environment now faces competition, with drones and counter-drone systems vying for spectrum access. Techniques like jamming and spoofing, which are widespread on the Ukrainian battlefield and increasingly seen in grey-zone operations across Europe, threaten the reliability of civilian communications. Future network architectures must incorporate dynamic spectrum management, interference-resistant waveforms, and cognitive radio capabilities that can adapt to rapidly changing conditions.

Equally exposed are positioning, navigation, and timing (PNT) systems. GPS and GNSS vulnerabilities have been repeatedly exploited in the drone sector. Network-based positioning solutions, multi-source PNT fusion, and anti-spoofing measures integrated into 6G infrastructure would significantly enhance both civilian and defence resilience.

Integrated sensing and communication (ISAC) opens a different angle. Drone detection and classification increasingly rely on real-time sensor fusion and machine learning at the edge. The U.S. Department of War's FutureG [7] Office has already recognised ISAC as a priority 6G capability for counter-drone applications, and Ericsson[8] has demonstrated a live drone-detection proof of concept using network-based sensing. Indeed, 6G architectures supporting distributed AI processing, low-latency inference, and secure civil-military data sharing would directly enhance counter-drone resilience across Europe.

Underpinning all of these is supply chain security. Both civilian ICT and military drone systems rely on the same global supply chains for semiconductors, sensors, and AI chips. European initiatives to secure these chains, including the European Chips Act[9], are directly relevant to both sectors.

Governance Gaps and the European Response

Europe has started to respond. The European Commission's Action Plan on Drone and Counter-Drone Security describes counter-drone defence as a civil-military task covering homeland security and battlefield operations. It advocates a coordinated EU approach to detection, response, and industrial readiness, including a new EU Counter-Drone Centre of Excellence[10], a Drone and Counter-Drone Industry Forum, and a proposed "EU Trusted Drone" certification scheme. The plan also acknowledges the role of 5G networks in real-time drone tracking and recommends sovereign, AI-powered command and control systems. The EU Defence Industry Transformation Roadmap[11], adopted in November 2025, and the Readiness Roadmap 2030[12], published in October 2025 and framed politically through the White Paper for European Defence and ReArm Europe Plan / Readiness 2030 in March 2025, support these efforts, though both remain mainly focused on industrial capacity rather than the governance issues raised by AI-enabled drone warfare.

These are important steps. Yet the central gap is institutional rather than technological. The current policy landscape still treats ICT resilience and defence innovation as separate areas, which leaves spectrum governance, telecom security, AI assurance, cloud dependency, and procurement oversight insufficiently connected. Thus, the dual-use drone challenge requires closer collaboration between the ICT research community and security policy actors. For the drone challenge, similar cross-sectoral platforms are crucial, linking expertise in next-generation networks, AI, spectrum policy and security governance.

Conclusion

The growth of dual-use drones poses a systemic threat to the resilience of the ICT infrastructure on which European societies, economies, and defence capabilities rely. As Europe moves towards 6G and the next era of connected intelligence, the lessons from the drone-AI link should inform how we design, govern, and protect our communications networks. Resilient ICT is increasingly essential to sovereignty and democratic governance in an era of ongoing aerial challenges. A dedicated EU civil-military ICT resilience framework, linking European Union Agency for Cybersecurity (ENISA), the European Defence Agency (EDA), and the Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications, would be a tangible first step towards the institutional architecture this challenge requires. Overall, what Europe needs is not only better technology, but a governance architecture capable of linking telecom policy, critical infrastructure protection, defence innovation, and democratic oversight. The ICT community has a key role to play, and the time to respond is now.

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Acknowledgment and Disclaimer:

The activities reported here were partially funded by the EC INPACE project (Grant Agreement number 101135568). The views expressed herein are solely by the author.

2nd EU-Japan Digital Week highlights shifting priorities and focus towards dual use technologies and even defence

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Following the very successful first iteration of an EU-Japan Digital Week in April 2025, the 2nd EU-Japan Digital Week was held in Tokyo from 24 March until 30 March 2026. As last year, the EU-Japan Digital Week was supported by the Horizon Europe co-ordination and support action INPACE, in which Eurescom is a partner, and responsible for the partnership with Japan in particular.

This second edition of the digital week included again by invitation only policy workshop with the title "Securing the Digital Horizon: EU-Japan Cooperation on Emerging Disruptive Technologies and Critical Infrastructure" with high level representation both from the Japanese and European side (*https://inpacehub.eu/eu-japan-digital-week-2026/*). Keynote remarks were provided by Jean-Eric Paquet, Ambassador of the European Union to Japan and Keitaro Ohno, Member, House of Representatives, Japan.

Against a backdrop of mounting geopolitical tensions, rapidly deteriorating security environment in Europe and Asia and the recent outright war against Iran, it is not surprising at all that the focus of geopolitical discussions shifted to resilience, critical, dependable and trusted connectivity, crisis response, space-based infrastructures, national security and defence. A range of dual use emerging and disruptive technologies were considered, including artificial intelligence (AI), quantum technologies and space technologies. Prominent policy experts, industry representatives, and researchers from Japan and Europe discussed avenues for joint Research and Development (R&D) initiatives, investments, technology governance, and trusted connectivity frameworks, including practical collaboration mechanisms under the EU-Japan Digital Partnership to ensure trusted supply chains, among others. Building on well-established and successful EU-Japan European Space Agency and Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency JAXA cooperation regarding Earth observation and other scientific space missions, aspects of space technologies were discussed including information sharing, space situational awareness alerts and incident reporting to enhance collective security. Strategies for aligning standards, resilience measures, and innovation ecosystems were looked at in a rapidly changing geopolitical and technological landscape, with the objective to jointly promote a rules-based, human-centric digital order in the Indo-Pacific and beyond. Main messages from the discussions included the vital importance of interoperable standards and governance.

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Group picture after the Policy Workshop on Tuesday 24 March 2026.

EURO-3C: Building Europe's Federated Telco-Edge-Cloud Future

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At Mobile World Congress 2026, the European Commission has announced the launch of EURO-3C, a €75 million initiative under Horizon Europe to build a federated Telco-Edge-Cloud infrastructure for Europe. The project brings together a broad ecosystem of telecommunications operators, cloud providers, technology companies and research organisations with the shared ambition of strengthening Europe's digital sovereignty and industrial competitiveness. EURO-3C will lay the foundation for a pan-European, multi-vendor infrastructure that integrates telecom networks, edge computing, cloud platforms and AI capabilities into a unified and interoperable environment. By federating distributed resources and service offerings across Europe, the initiative will help reduce fragmentation, unlock new digital services and support the growing demand for high-performance, low-latency and secure computing.

Key Challenges

Delivering such an ambitious vision requires overcoming several structural and technological challenges.

One of the core challenges lies in integrating diverse Telco, Cloud, Edge and AI infrastructures across multiple providers. Differences in orchestration frameworks, interoperability standards, performance requirements and operational models create significant technical complexity. EURO-3C will federate these distributed heterogeneous infrastructures and service lines from major EU Telco and Cloud providers into a comprehensive multi-vendor environment; the EURO-3C pilot infrastructure. Within this infrastructure, Telco-Edge-Cloud platforms will provide a sovereign, unified service catalogue that enables openness and interoperability across providers and delivering high performance.

Emerging AI workloads and vertical industry use cases require unprecedented levels of connectivity, storage and computing capacity, which are often distributed down to the far edge. Low latency, high throughput and elastic scalability are baseline requirements for sectors such as Automotive, Transport, Energy and Public Protection & Disaster Relief (PPDR), among others. The project will demonstrate how a federated Telco-Edge-Cloud infrastructure can scale to meet demands, co-designed with stakeholders from these key sectors to ensure real-world relevance and impact.

EURO-3C embeds security-by-design and Zero Trust principles into federated, multi-domain environments, ensuring interoperable mechanisms that protect cross-domain interactions and safeguarding EU' critical infrastructures and data flows. Resilience, cybersecurity operations and trusted service orchestration are integral components of the architecture.

Scaling Telco-Edge-Cloud services across Europe requires navigating fragmented markets and differences in regulatory frameworks. The ambition is to come up with interoperable and sustainable business models that are fully compliant with EU and national regulation and legislation. Alignment of technological innovation with regulatory clarity, is the foundation of a trusted and competitive European digital ecosystem.

Strategic Objectives

To translate its vision into practical outcomes, EURO-3C has established a set of strategic objectives. At its core, the project seeks to design a robust architectural and implementation pathway toward an open, multi-supplier, and multi-vendor 3CN infrastructure. It promotes openness and interoperability for reducing technological fragmentation and expedite a competitive and innovative European digital ecosystem. A key pillar is the convergence of connectivity and computing through AI-enabled resource integration across Telco, Edge, and Cloud domains. The project will explore how intelligent orchestration and multi-domain federation can transform distributed network and computing resources into a coherent service environment.

Building on this technical foundation, EURO-3C will develop an interoperable, customer-facing service layer that allows seamless cross-domain service delivery. Through intelligent orchestration mechanisms and multi-level federation, the project aims to simplify access to complex distributed infrastructure. The project will integrate AI-enhanced cybersecurity and privacy protection mechanisms, to safeguard data exchanges and service operations across federated domains.

The project targets large-scale operational validation across Europe. It will demonstrate how supply and demand ecosystems can converge to support real-world applications in vertical sectors by deploying capabilities across the infrastructure and validating them through vertical industry use cases. Recognising that sustainable adoption requires viable economic models, the project will investigate business frameworks that support long-term market deployment. These efforts will focus on ensuring that federated Telco-Edge-Cloud services can operate effectively within competitive market conditions and delivering value to ecosystem participants. Finally, EURO-3C aims to contribute to the broader European policy landscape by supporting the development of a more coherent regulatory environment. It will provide input on governance and compliance aspects, and seek to simplify the current regulatory complexity and align technological progress with Europe's long-term digital sovereignty objectives.

Eurescom's Contribution

At Eurescom GmbH, we are committed to contribute to this strategically important initiative. With our long-standing experience in organising and supporting large-scale European research and innovation programmes, we are committed to helping ensure the smooth implementation and effective operational set-up of EURO-3C. Managing complex multi-partner environments, facilitating structured collaboration, and ensuring alignment between technical progress and strategic objectives are areas where Eurescom brings substantial added value.

We also extend our sincere appreciation to the Eurescom shareholders and the broader European community of telecommunications operators, as well as equipment vendors, cloud providers, service providers, and major European research institutes, for supporting and helping advance this ambitious effort for the development of the substrate of a strong European digital ecosystem.

Further information

- European Commission. "Commission Announces €75 Million EURO-3C Project to Build Federated Telco-Edge-Cloud Infrastructure." Last modified March 3, 2026. *https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/news/commission-announces-eu75-million-euro-3c-project-build-federated-telco-edge-cloud-infrastructure*

FORTRESS: Building Europe's Quantum-Safe Future through Hybrid Secure Boot Innovation

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As Europe accelerates its digital transformation, resilience emerges as a defining requirement for next-generation ICT infrastructure. Hyper-connectivity and the growing reliance on software-driven ecosystems have expanded the cyber-attack surface, making foundational security mechanisms more critical than ever. Among these mechanisms, the secure boot process plays a vital role in protecting digital systems by ensuring that only trusted and authenticated software is executed. In an era of emerging quantum computing threats, strengthening this foundational layer is becoming a strategic priority for Europe's technological sovereignty.

Quantum algorithms, particularly those capable of solving complex mathematical problems exponentially faster than classical computing approaches, threaten to undermine current cryptographic foundations. This shift is driving global research efforts toward Post-Quantum Cryptography (PQC), which aims to develop algorithms resistant to quantum attacks while maintaining compatibility with existing infrastructure.

European policy and cybersecurity authorities have increasingly advocated for hybrid cryptographic strategies that combine traditional and post-quantum algorithms[1]. This hybrid Post-Quantum/Traditional (PQ/T) is seen as a practical pathway toward future-proof cybersecurity. However, implementation remains complex due to trade-offs between computational performance, hardware constraints, regulatory compliance, and operational scalability. Addressing these challenges requires innovation not only in cryptographic design but also in system architecture and hardware integration.

The EU-funded FORTRESS project directly addresses this strategic challenge by developing a scalable hybrid secure boot architecture designed for Europe's evolving digital infrastructure. The project focuses on creating a flexible Root of Trust framework capable of integrating both classical and post-quantum cryptographic algorithms. Rather than replacing existing systems abruptly, FORTRESS promotes a gradual and secure transition towards quantum-resistant security models.

A core innovation of the project lies in its hardware-software co-design approach. By aligning cryptographic functions with hardware capabilities, FORTRESS aims to optimize security performance while maintaining operational efficiency across diverse device ecosystems.

The project also recognizes that digital resilience extends beyond technical design to include ecosystem interoperability and regulatory alignment. FORTRESS actively engages with industry stakeholders, and cybersecurity experts to ensure that developed solutions align with European security frameworks and compliance requirements. This collaborative approach supports broader adoption and helps bridge the gap between research innovation and practical deployment.

From a strategic perspective, FORTRESS contributes to Europe's long-term digital sovereignty. As cyber threats become increasingly sophisticated, resilience must be built directly into the architecture of digital systems rather than added as an afterthought. By investing in quantum-resistant security solutions today, Europe can safeguard critical services, protect sensitive data, and maintain trust in digital technologies for decades to come.

The project also delivers broader societal and economic benefits. Secure digital infrastructure is a prerequisite for emerging technologies such as autonomous systems, smart cities, and advanced healthcare platforms. By strengthening secure boot mechanisms, FORTRESS supports the safe deployment of these technologies while reducing cybersecurity risks.

Looking forward, the transition to quantum-safe cybersecurity requires coordinated efforts across research institutions, industry partners, and regulatory bodies. Projects such as FORTRESS demonstrate how collaborative innovation can transform cybersecurity challenges into opportunities for technological leadership. By combining cryptographic research, and ecosystem collaboration, the project contributes to shaping a more secure and resilient European digital future.

References

[1] https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/library/recommendation-coordinated-implementation-roadmap-transition-post-quantum-cryptography

Strengthening Europe's media sovereignty with the Future Media Initiative

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Introduction

Europe is a leading force in journalism, culture and audiovisual storytelling. It produces high-quality media that informs citizens, strengthens democratic debate and reflects Europe's diverse cultures. Yet the balance of power has shifted massively. While Europe continues to create valuable content and attract large audiences, the infrastructures that distribute, monetise and analyse that content are increasingly controlled by non-European platforms. As a result, much of the economic value and strategic influence generated by Europe's media ecosystem flows elsewhere.

This growing gap between content creation and platform control is a core issue for European media sovereignty. Ensuring that European media organisations can compete, innovate and maintain direct relationships with their audiences is therefore not only an economic priority, but also a democratic one.

Europe creates extraordinary media value, but the profit flows elsewhere

Europe remains one of the world's largest media markets. The audiovisual and news media sector generates around €111 billion annually, complemented by roughly €21 billion in yearly public service media investment in content creation. This sustains a vibrant ecosystem of journalists, producers, creators and media companies across the continent.

However, the way audiences access content has fundamentally changed. Consumption increasingly takes place on global platforms, rather than services controlled by European media organisations. According to the European Audiovisual Observatory, 61% of hours watched on subscription streaming services in Europe is US content. Furthermore, 82% of VOD viewing time in Europe occurs on US platforms.

This shift has profound consequences for the media ecosystem. Platforms do not only distribute content; they also control the first-party audience data that determines how content is recommended, targeted and monetised. Access to this data is the key strategic asset of the digital media economy. It allows companies to understand audience behaviour, personalise services, improve recommendations, optimise advertising models and build long-term relationships with users. When this data is mediated through external platforms, media organisations lose both insight into their audiences and control over how their content reaches them.

This weakens pluralism, competitiveness and digital sovereignty. Algorithms may prioritise engagement over diversity, media companies cannot fully monetise their audiences, and key decisions about information flows occur outside European governance structures. With trust in media across Europe falling to 34%, the consequences are clearly visible. 51% of Europeans even actively avoid the news, contributing to democratic disengagement and increased vulnerability to misinformation.

Economically, the imbalance is equally striking. European audiences spend roughly €47 billion annually on media products and services, yet 81% of this spending flows to non-European companies. At the same time, Europe's digital infrastructure is heavily dependent on US providers such as Apple, Microsoft, Google, Amazon and Meta. The result is a structural paradox: Europe produces the content and delivers the audience, but non-European platforms control the infrastructure, the revenue streams and increasingly what people see.

Protecting the audience is not enough

Europe has taken important regulatory steps to protect media freedom and democratic discourse. Initiatives such as the European Media Freedom Act (EMFA) and the European Democracy Shield safeguard independent journalism, editorial autonomy and media pluralism. However, regulation alone cannot solve the structural challenges facing the European media sector. Protecting independence is only one part of the solution. Europe must also strengthen its innovation capacity and technological resilience to make those principles viable. In practice, this means designing the next generation of media technologies, platforms and user experiences based on the European values of transparency, accountability and pluralism.

This is precisely where the Future Media Initiative comes in. Build on the solid foundation of Future Media Hubs (bringing together about 60 European media companies to collaborate on media innovation), the Future Media Initiative proposes an industry-led public-private partnership for the next EU Multi-annual Financial Framework (2028–2034). Its goal is to unlock up to €500 million in coordinated investment for European media innovation. Rather than funding isolated experiments, the initiative introduces a structured "innovation funnel" approach. Promising project ideas developed by media companies can progress from early experimentation to large-scale implementation through staged investment.

This approach maximises impact while reducing risk. Projects are rigorously evaluated, refined and scaled only once they demonstrate clear value. Participating organisations can receive co-financing of up to 50% of their innovation costs, enabling ambitious

technological development that would otherwise be difficult to fund. In doing so, the Future Media Initiative helps ensure that European media companies develop the infrastructures, tools and services needed to remain competitive and maintain direct relationships with their audiences.

Europe must design the solution together with the industry

Without coordinated action, Europe risks gradually losing control over the digital infrastructures that shape public discourse. The Future Media Initiative offers a practical solution by aligning industry, policy makers and investors around a shared goal: a sustainable, innovative and sovereign European media ecosystem.

Many leading organisations have already expressed their support, including Schibsted, France Télévisions, Fremantle and the European Broadcasting Union (EBU). To further strengthen this momentum, we encourage media leaders across Europe to sign the Declaration of Support and to promote the initiative within their networks. At the same time, engagement with policy makers is essential. We are actively working with national authorities and European institutions – including Member State representatives and Members of the European Parliament – to ensure strong support for the initiative in future EU policy frameworks.

Conclusion

European media sovereignty is not about isolation or protectionism. It is about ensuring that Europe retains the ability to shape its own information environment, sustain trusted journalism and foster cultural diversity. Europe already has the talent, creativity and audience needed to lead. What it now needs is a stronger capacity to innovate and scale. By mobilising coordinated investment and strengthening collaboration across the industry, the Future Media Initiative ensures that European media organisations remain competitive, trusted and resilient.

The stakes are high. In a world where the information sphere has become a central arena of geopolitical competition, strengthening Europe's media ecosystem is ultimately about protecting democracy itself

News in brief

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INPACE – EU–Japan Digital Week 2026

Group picture after the Policy Workshop on Tuesday 24 March 2026.

Like previous years, EU–Japan Digital Week was held in Tokyo. The INPACE project initiative contributed to strengthening cooperation on emerging digital technologies, including AI, semiconductors and quantum computing. Eurescom was directly involved in the "Advancing EU–Japan Digital Cooperation: Insights from the Week and Next Steps" workshop session, co-organised by Adam Kapovits, Project Manager at Eurescom and Dr Stevana Klessove, GAC Group, which session was session for learning across topics, making new connections, and understanding what comes next in EU-Japan digital cooperation.

The session combined concise insights from organisers, live hackathon pitches demonstrating interoperable digital public infrastructure solutions between Europe and Japan, and forward-looking exchanges on future collaboration. It provided a clear view of how EU–Japan cooperation is evolving from dialogue to concrete joint actions, with a focus on interoperability, trusted data spaces and long-term research partnerships.

WiTaR – Advancing Inclusion in 6G Research

WiTaR annual postcard for the International Women Day 2026 on the theme "Give to Gain"

The WiTaR working group initiative continued to promote inclusion and gender balance within the 6G research and innovation ecosystem. Marking International Women's Day 2026, WiTaR reaffirmed its commitment to increasing the visibility and participation of women across technical and leadership roles. This year campaign was "Give to Gain". The ongoing effort of the working group is further supported through its Lunch Salon series, with the recent fourth edition focusing on the inTRUSTED project and the role of trust and inclusivity in future digital ecosystems. Through these regular exchanges, WiTaR provides a practical platform to address skills gaps, encourage diverse participation in standardisation and research, and contribute to a more balanced and representative 6G community.

SUSTAIN-6G – Photonics for Sustainable ICT 2026

Best Paper Honorable Mention awarded to the SUSTAIN-6G paper "Photonic Continuity: Sustainable Wired and Wireless Photonics from kilobits per second (kbps) to Petabits per second (Pbps)", authored by Olivier Bouchet, Yanes Yahoui, Guillaume Vercasson, Vincent de la Broise, Irene Kolokytha, and Sokratis Barmpounakis.

The SUSTAIN-6G project was actively involved in the PHOTOPTICS 2026 conference, where a dedicated workshop on "Photonic Technologies for a Sustainable ICT" explored the role of advanced optical technologies in reducing the environmental impact of future networks. The session brought together keynote and invited speakers to address challenges related to energy consumption, lifecycle assessment and sustainable system design.

Contributions ranged from methodological approaches for evaluating environmental impact to technical innovations in optical transmission and data centre interconnections. The recognition of a SUSTAIN-6G paper with a Best Paper Honorable Mention further highlighted the project's contribution to advancing sustainable solutions in next-generation communication systems.

EURO-3C – Building Europe's Telco-Edge-Cloud Infrastructure

EURO-3C unveiled at MWC 2026

The EURO-3C project, recently announced by the European Commission with a budget of €75 million under Horizon Europe, represents a significant step towards strengthening Europe's digital sovereignty. Bringing together 87 partners from across the telecommunications, cloud and research sectors, the project aims to develop a federated Telco-Edge-Cloud infrastructure capable of supporting advanced digital services across Europe.

Further information

- INPACE EU–Japan Digital Week 2026: *https://inpacehub.eu/eu-japan-digital-week-2026/#schedule*
- WiTaR 6G-IA working group: *https://6g-ia.eu/witar/*
- SUSTAIN-6G workshop at PHOTOPTICS 2026: *https://sustain-6g.eu/events/workshop-at-photoptics-2026-photonic-technologies-for-a-sustainable-ict/*
- EURO-3C project announcement: *https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/news/commission-announces-eu75-million-euro-3c-project-build-federated-telco-edge-cloud-infrastructure*

EuresTools

Effective Tools for European Research Projects

EuresTools is a modular suite of Cloud-based software tools which facilitate controlling and reporting and enable distributed project teams to communicate and manage information effectively. Over 200 successful European research projects and initiatives have already benefited from **EuresTools**.

Contact us at **services@eurescom.eu** to get further information.

http://www.eurescom.eu/EuresTools

HAPPY New

DAVID KENNEDY

I first met David 20 years ago during the launch events for FP7. This started a long, satisfying and fruitful relationship. We met up frequently and I always enjoyed our conversations which often left me thinking about the impact of some new angle! The highlight was the way we were able to work together as Director and Chairman of Eurescom respectively. Helping David to steer the company over the 15 years I had the role remains a highlight. I wish David all the best for his retirement and hope he gets to spend more time with his Porsches.

Paul Jenkins, retired from BT and previous Chairman of Eurescom

It was always a pleasure working with David. We greatly appreciated your deep knowledge and understanding of the EC funding environment. Thank you for your dedication over the years and support of DT's innovation topics. Wishing you all the very best for a fulfilling retirement ahead. ..on behalf of many Telekom colleagues you worked with.

Riccardo Pascotto, Deutsche Telekom AG, T-Labs

When I met David for the first time, he was the project supervisor of the SALTAMONTES project (P1115), which I was leading. He nearly never showed up, but we gave him the best mark. He asked me: Why? My answer: You trusted us and me. This was the beginning of an excellent friendship.

Hans Joachim Einsiedler, Deutsche Telekom AGC

In my involvement to EURESCOM activities it was a great pleasure working with David Kennedy, in many Instances! David was always present to provide immediate feedback and, most importantly, to create an interactive framework based on mutual respect and bona-fide.

Ioannis Chochliouros, Head of R&D Labs, R&D Department, Hellenic Telecommunications Organization S.A. (OTE)

Beginning

David and I studied Electrical Engineering together, graduating in 1983. Even then David's enthusiasm for German engineering was evident. While most of the class commuted by bicycle, David arrived for lectures in a high-powered Audi. After graduation, we worked together in the Network Planning Department of Telecom Eireann and David was always available with sage advice and help for his colleagues. Later, when he became Director of Eurescom, I re-established contact with him in my role as a Shareholder representative.
David's contribution to Eurescom has been immense. I greatly admire the hard work he has done over many years in building it into the organisation it is today. He will be sorely missed but I wish him every happiness in his retirement. He deserves it.

Paul Callan (retired)
Former Shareholder representative of eir

It has been a real privilege to work with David Kennedy through the transition from 4G to 5G and now towards 6G.
His leadership aligned technology, industry, and policy; his passion for cars reflects a belief in speed and performance.

Patrick Waldemar, Telenor

Working with David Kennedy has always meant engaging with innovative ideas and collaborative spirit. His vision and dedication have shaped Eurescom and inspired countless colleagues, myself included, to pursue excellence in our field.

Waltraud Müllner, A1 Telekom Austria AG

From my first immersion in Heidelberg during the health sector studies long time ago to our collaboration on the shareholders board, I've admired your passionate, precise, and swift leadership, always paired with great conviviality.
A page turns, David, but I know your incredible energy will find wonderful new roots. Best wishes et merci David!

Laure Chotard, Orange

Dear David,
It's hard to believe that 22 years have passed since I left Eurescom to return to Orange after four transformative years as a programme manager. Those years provided me with an invaluable European experience and created very nice memories that have enriched my entire professional journey. Working alongside you and the "Eurescom family" has been tremendously educational. You presented me with professional challenges I hadn't even dared to imagine, including the opportunity to chair the Celtic-Next cluster—a role I embraced with a mixture of tremendous effort, occasional stress, and big pleasure.
Now, it is your turn to leave Eurescom to concentrate on hobbies, a well-deserved reward after your distinguished career. I hope you savor every moment with your loved ones and your collection of cherished automobiles.
Wishing you a fulfilling and joyous retirement !

Valérie Blavette, Orange

All the

David, I could never thank you enough for being here for me during my professional career, when most people were not. I truly enjoyed most of the time we spent together for so many years. I wish you all the best and hope to see you in Le Chatelet or Romorantin one of these days. Cheers.

Jacques Magen, ex-CELTIC Chairman

It has been an honor and privilege to work with David. His strategic leadership in Eurescom, 5GPPP and SNS JU significantly contributed to connectivity R&I in Europe, leaving a lasting mark on the community. He leaves behind strong SNS partnerships and an inspiring legacy. His professionalism and vision will be greatly missed. Wishing him a fulfilling retirement!

Pavlos Fournogerakis, Deputy Head of Programmes in SNS JU

Dear David it has been a pleasure. I cannot believe a young person such as yourself is really going in "rente". Take care of yourself and stay in touch. Best regards, Colin, Lucian and Simone

Colin Willcock, 6G-IA / Nokia

Over the past three decades I changed employers -and even industries- three times. Yet working with David and the EURESCOM team remained a constant. This continuity says much about David's leadership and the lasting success of EURESOM. My best wishes for the future!

Joachim Posegga, University of Passau

Best!

DAVID KENNEDY

David presents great leadership and organization skills in very dramatic transformations of EURESCOM and placement on EU ICT market. He is a very friendly person, loving his Porsche and football.
Wishing good health and all the best in future life my dear David.

Milan Jankovic PhD EE
Representative of former Shareholder Community of Yugoslav PTT Belgrade, SERBIA

Imagining a European collaborative research programme in telecoms without David is an awkward and sad perspective. His contribution in the field over the last 30 years has been invaluable, as he has been the "Porsche like engine" behind EU collaboration across multiple European players. He will be missed, but at the same time, lots of luck for a well deserved "second life".

Bernard Barani, Former European Commission, DG CONNECT

Working with David over the years has been a real privilege. His deep knowledge of European initiatives, combined with vision and creativity, made collaboration inspiring. Supportive, approachable and always with a great sense of humour, he lifted colleagues in demanding times.

Alex Kaloxylos, 6G-IA

I think it is time to share a long-running joke between David and me—one that a few people have overheard over the years, often creating some confusion around us. When I first met David — so long ago that I can no longer recall exactly when, but I would look like in the picture — we were in a setting where everyone came from outside the UK and Ireland. I was immediately struck by his command of the English language, which made me assume he was English.
A few minutes later (for reasons I no longer remember), I made a passing remark about his "Englishness."
Without missing a beat, he casually replied by referring to my "Spanishness."
And that was the moment he became my favorite "Englishman"—and, I hope, I became his favorite "Spaniard.

Rui Aguiar, Instituto de Telecomunicações, Universidade de Aveiro, Portugal

I have started to work with David and Eurescom a long time ago when Orange was France Telecom/CNET and Eurescom location was near the Heidelberg Castle! We have setup the NEM ETP, the 5G PPP, the SNS JU and the CEF 5G Corridors ... very fruitful collaborations with David and now it is time to enjoy something else than Telecommunication, I shall be happy to meet David if he is planning to drive its Porsche in Brittany!

Pierre-Yves Danet, 6G-IA

Dear David, I realize we met 10 years ago, when I was working with Jacques Magen at Interinnov, before taking my current position in AENEAS. I always enjoyed working with you, we shared views and battles for Eureka clusters to remain lean and effective instruments in the overall funding landscape. Now I wish you a nice and relaxing time with your retirement!

Caroline Bedran, AENEAS

Hard work and cheerful celebrating, I could do both with David. Whether in the TINA context in the USA, with the Global Network Architecture Board in Japan or with the European Commission in Brussels. And always his humor stood out. Happy Retirement David.

Dr. Hendrik Berndt, Vice President Wireless World Research Forum EMEA

Many thanks, David, for four decades of friendship, for your steadfast efforts to solve the many and varied political challenges we encountered, and particularly for your generous help and advice on the many occasions when we have worked together. Enjoy your well-earned retirement!

Fiona Williams

Over more than two decades, I experienced David as a firm yet fair negotiator, always reliable, trustworthy, and personally kind. His clarity, commitment, and integrity shaped a trusted partnership that I truly valued. I wish him good health and much happiness in the years ahead.

Hans-Jörg Kraus, KRAUSGRUPPE, Geschäftsführender Gesellschafter

Thank you!

DAVID KENNEDY

Dear David.
Wow... Time is super flying...20 years...! Congratulations! So many great achievements, challenges, meetings, souvenirs, "historical" citations ...! This was a very very great pleasure and honour working and interacting with you. I am wishing you all the best! Take care!
Kind Regards. Didier.

Didier Bourse, Nokia

Dear David,
since we met first around 2000 we were closely cooperating in WWRF, WWI projects, the European Technology Platform Networld Europe and its predecessors, 5G PPP and finally SNS JU. Thank you very much for your continuous support and good and constructive cooperation during the development of several generations of mobile communications. I wish you and your family all the best for the future.
Best regards, Werner

Werner Mohr, 6G-IA (former Siemens and Nokia)

Thank you so much, dear David, for the excellent collaboration over the past almost two decades! We are very pleased that Eurescom has its headquarters and conducts its research in Heidelberg. I wish you all the best for your retirement, especially good health and happiness.

Eckart Würzner, Mayor of Heidelberg

During more than 20 years I had the privilege to meet David on a yearly basis while discussing with him the annual accounts of EURESCOM. Each time I was impressed by the ALL IN ONE director who covered alone with high-level competence sales, finance and shareholder relationship topics.

Gerhard Meyer; German CPA and tax advisor; managing Partner at FALK (1991 until 2025); of counsel partner at FALK (since Jan 1, 2026)

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Innovation through Collaboration

Eurescom is the leading organisation for managing collaborative R&D in telecommunications. Our mission is to provide efficient management and support of R&D projects, programmes, and initiatives for our customers. We offer more than two decades of experience in managing large-scale, international R&D for major industry players, the European Commission, and EUREKA Cluster CELTIC-NEXT. What distinguishes Eurescom is the combination of a secure, reliable infrastructure for collaborative work, a large European network of experts, and internationally outstanding project management skills.

QR code to the online edition of Eurescom message