

## EU DIGITAL STRATEGY AT A TIME OF GEOPOLITICAL STRESS

The panel chair Scott Marcus presented four issues for discussion: (i) possible tensions between the recovery and the digitisation agenda, (ii) the EU's poor record as a producer of key digital technologies, (iii) the role of platforms in the digital economy, and (iv) decreased in multilateralism. The panel discussants intervened in turn on these topics.

Gerard de Graaf emphasized the need for EU investments in public goods: part of the recovery funds should go towards advancing the digital agenda. Gerard de Graaf also called for greater EU market integration to allow ICT firms to scale up beyond their national borders.

Francesca Bria identified four challenges: (i) geopolitical multipolarity, (ii) market concentration, (iii) industrial weakness, and (iv) algorithmic powers. Her solution: Big Democracy and a Digital Green New Deal as an alternative to China's Big State and the US's Big Tech.

Alberto di Felice described the EU weakness in the high tech sector as an industrial policy challenge, not a competition policy challenge. The EU needs to find its place in the global value chain. One promising area is digital technologies for application in traditional industries.

Georgios Petropoulos proposed that the EU follow a market efficiency approach and provide rules that ensure value is redistributed at the local level. This would take the form of a regulatory framework around, e.g. data sharing.

The panel ended on an optimism note: the EU does not lag on all technological fronts. It is strong in IoT, robotics, quantum computing as well as in important AI applications such as FinTech and AgroTech. These are areas where the EU should strive towards setting global standards.

Julia Anderson