

# DIGITALIZATION STRATEGY

Using the digital transformation.  
For our state and our people.



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# PREFACE

Digitalization is transforming our world at great speed. New technologies, data-based applications and artificial intelligence are shaping business, administration and society and opening up new opportunities for innovation, growth and quality of life. Here in Lower Austria, we want to actively shape this transformation and make full use of the opportunities provided by digitalization – for our businesses, municipalities and, above all, the people in our state.

Digital technologies are today opening up possibilities that were barely conceivable just a few years ago. They help us to make better decisions, design processes more efficiently and implement new innovations more quickly. At the same time, we have a clear principle: digitalization must benefit the people in our state. Trust, transparency and digital ethics are just as important as our digital sovereignty. We want to design our digital infrastructure, data and technologies securely, responsibly and autonomously. This digitalization strategy will enable Lower Austria to continue on its successful journey towards digital transformation. We are investing in high-performing digital infrastructures, developing strong digital literacy and creating space for innovation in business, administration and society. Our focus on what is most important is unwavering; we want to use digitalization to make people's lives easier and better.

We have a clear goal: to secure existing jobs and create new ones, strengthen our regions and continue to increase the quality of life in Lower Austria. Digitalization should bring specific benefits – for our businesses, our municipalities and for every person in Lower Austria.

If we go on this journey together, we can turn digitalization into a strong driver for innovation, progress and a successful future for Lower Austria..



Johanna Mikl-Leitner  
Governor of Lower Austria





## DIGITALIZATION IS A REALITY

Digitalization is increasingly shaping developments in society, business and countries around the world. Dynamic technological progress is affecting almost all areas of life. Data is becoming a central resource, while artificial intelligence is opening up new opportunities in production, administration, research and in daily life. At the same time, there is an increasing focus on questions related to digital ethics, the protection of basic rights and the responsible use of technology. The digital sovereignty of states and regions is also becoming more important: this covers the ability to independently shape digital technologies, infrastructures and data, ensure that they are resilient and reliable and strengthen the capacity to have an impact in the digital space. International competitiveness, innovation and societal cohesion are strongly connected with how these developments are used and applied.

Lower Austria is also part of this global change. Digitalization is understood as a long-term process that needs to be supported in an active and forward-looking manner. Under the guiding principle of "Using the digital transformation. For our state and our people", Lower Austria is pursuing an extensive digitalization strategy that combines technological innovation with responsibility. The aim is therefore to make the best use of opportunities, consciously address risks and ensure that digital development benefits the people and economy in the state of Lower Austria in the long term. Digitalization will become the driver for new ideas, future-oriented services and sustainable development with a view to benefiting the state and its people.

*People are at the heart of these developments. The focus of the activities is therefore on raising awareness, supporting transformation, enabling the people in Lower Austria to get the right qualifications and accompanying them through future changes. This will also open up new opportunities in rural areas.*



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# LOWER AUSTRIA IS A FUTURE-ORIENTED STATE

Lower Austria is actively using digitalization for the future.

Many present-day conditions are presenting Lower Austria with considerable challenges in the face of the advancing digitalization.

These include providing the necessary infrastructure by ensuring that all homes have access to broadband. The aim is to develop a gigabit-capable broadband infrastructure throughout Lower Austria by 2030. Our strategic goal is to provide all households, companies and public institutions with high-performance, future-proof connectivity.

A further challenge lies in the high degree of heterogeneity across the regions of Lower Austria and within these regions themselves. The differences can be seen in various aspects, not only in terms of demography, economic structure and dynamics, purchasing power, workforce potential, but also in terms of supply and accessibility. As in many European territories, there is a high field of tension between the rapidly growing central areas and the peripheral regions.

The digitalization needs of specific regions must therefore be taken into consideration. Lower Austria is home to important transport axes such as roads, railways, waterways and Vienna Airport.

The state has a diversified business structure with a high number of SMEs. In the last 30 years, 15 new tertiary education institutes have been established in the dynamic research and education sector. In many areas of administration, digitalization has already significantly changed, accelerated and facilitated work processes.

*Region-specific needs are the key to effective digitalization.*





# MOVING FORWARD WITH CONSIDERABLE EXPERIENCE

## Lower Austria is in the midst of digitalization

Lower Austria's digital development is based on the early, forward-looking and strategic approach with which the state acknowledges its role as a driving force for digital transformation. The establishment of the Technology and Digitalization Unit in the Department of Economy, Tourism and Technology in 2017 created a central organizational basis for bringing together digital matters, continuing to develop the strategy and coordinating across departments. This was followed by the creation and implementation of the state's first digitalization strategy, which defined a clear framework for goals, fields of action and specific measures and thus offered orientation for administration, business and society.

A significant milestone was the launch of the "House of Digitalization" project in 2018 as a network throughout Lower Austria. This lighthouse project opened up new channels for networking, information and raising awareness.

The establishment of the state-wide digitalization network and introduction of the [www.virtuelleshaus.at](http://www.virtuelleshaus.at) platform in 2019 consolidated this development and created a central information hub.

The "Human + Machine" exhibition at the House of Digitalization, which was opened in 2022, enabled people to physically experience digitalization for the first time.

In the following years, the offer was continually expanded through exhibitions such as "Smart Data + You" and "Is digital the solution? Innovations for our future". The Science Center Lower Austria, which was opened in 2024 and has specialized labs and an interactive escape room, appeals to new target groups and teaches digital literacy in a practical manner.

Another important step was the further organizational development in 2026 when the business unit moved to the Office of the Lower Austrian State Government and became the Digitalization and Innovation Unit. This provided a wider focus on digitalization to actively and responsibly shape future digital transformation in Lower Austria for the benefit of the people.

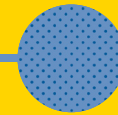
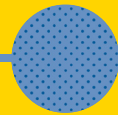
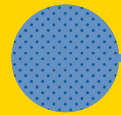
*This consistent path toward digitalization provides orientation, brings stakeholders together and drives progress for the state and its people.*



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# ORIENTATION TOWARDS INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL STRATEGIES



## Europe's Digital Decade

With "Europe's Digital Decade", the European Union has created a binding framework for digital development up until 2030.

The focus is on four central areas with the aim of jointly strengthening Europe's ability to compete and act: a digitally competent state, digital literacy in the population, a strong digital economy and a modern, secure infrastructure.

The aim is to make consistent use of digital opportunities, speed up digital transformation in companies and further develop digital public services. This should enable Europe to strengthen its global competitive position and also ensure that digitalization brings specific, tangible benefits for people, regions and businesses. This serves as a basis for facilitating and strategically coordinating further initiatives at the federal, state and municipal levels.

## Digitalization in Austria

At the national level, digital transformation is being shaped through several aligned strategies and action plans. With the "Digital Austria Act 2.0" and "Digital Action Plan Austria", the government is following the overarching goal of driving forward digital transformation in Austria in a coordinated, impact-oriented and sustainable manner. Digitalization is intended to strengthen the government, economy and society in equal measure, ensure the region's competitiveness, and focus on the benefits for people.

Other strategic documents such as the "Digital Literacy Initiative," the further development of e-government, national approaches to artificial intelligence, the data strategy, and initiatives in the field of e-health serve as other important points of reference. These strategies together create the framework for a modern administration, an innovative economy, empowering people and the responsible use of digital technologies.

The digitalization strategy for Lower Austria is oriented towards these federal guidelines and helps to implement these goals effectively at the regional level.

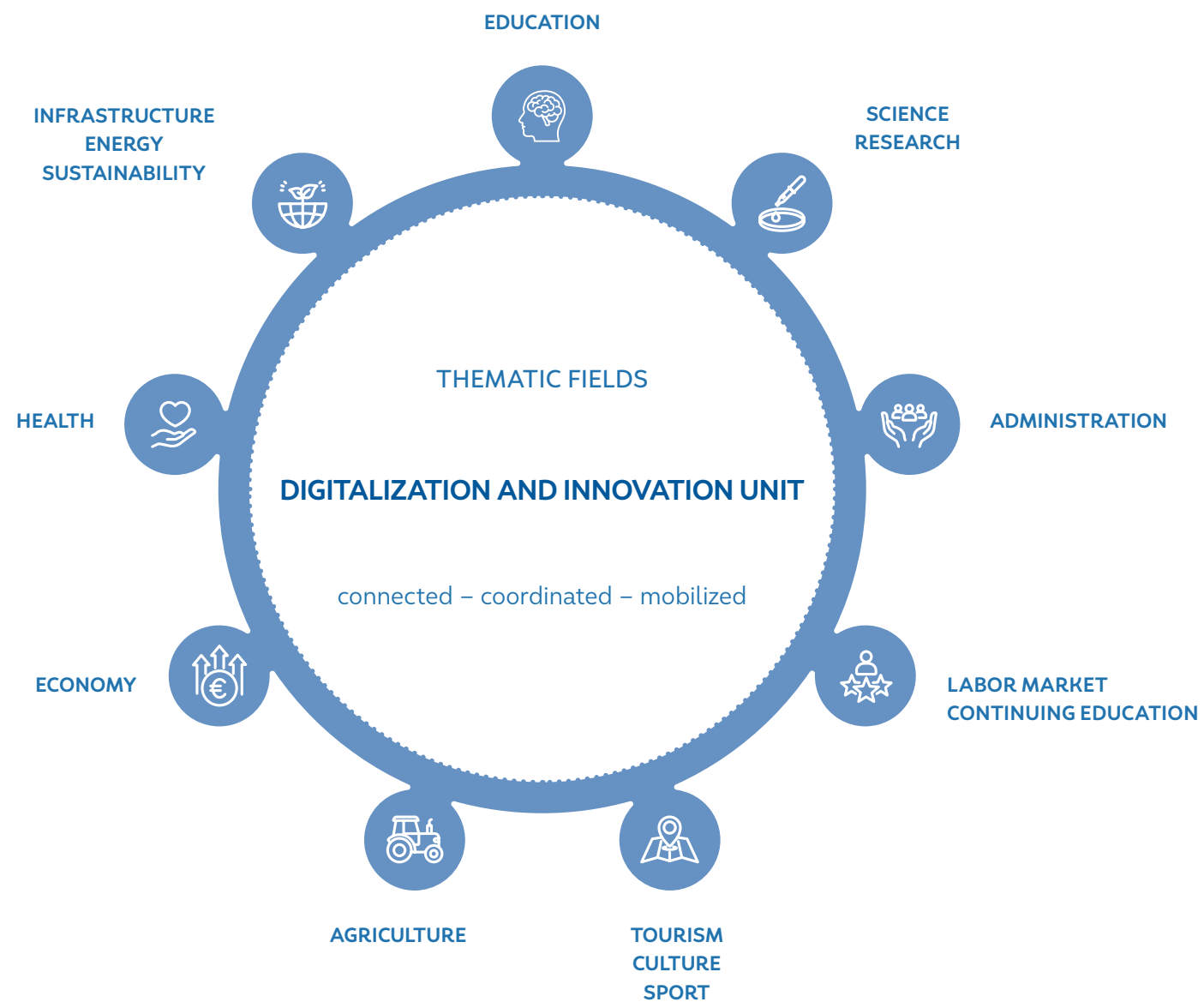
## Connected with other strategies in Lower Austria

The digitalization strategy for Lower Austria is designed as a comprehensive, cross-cutting strategy and oriented towards the State Strategy Lower Austria 2030. Digitalization is a supporting and connecting factor for strengthening the existing strategic goals and speeding up their implementation. Coordination of content and modifications ensure that digital developments are coherent, impact-oriented, and in line with Lower Austria's long-term objectives.

In particular, the digitalization strategy is linked to the following strategies of the state of Lower Austria:

- State Strategy Lower Austria 2030
- Economic Strategy Lower Austria 2030+
- RTI Strategy Lower Austria
- Mobility Concept Lower Austria 2030+
- University Strategy Lower Austria 2030+

As a central cross-sectoral theme, digitalization will also be considered and integrated when creating and developing future state strategies.



To connect, coordinate and mobilize the various digitalization initiatives of the state of Lower Austria, the “Technology and Digitalization Unit” was established in the spring of 2017 in the Office of the Lower Austrian State Government. The unit was further developed and became the “Digitalization and Innovation Unit” in 2026. It brings together all internal and external stakeholders in different thematic fields to jointly shape the innovation process. It also coordinates strategic development and initiates lighthouse digitalization projects.

The House of Digitalization is a digital display window for the lighthouse projects and makes digital innovations, applications and future solutions visible for the population and business world.



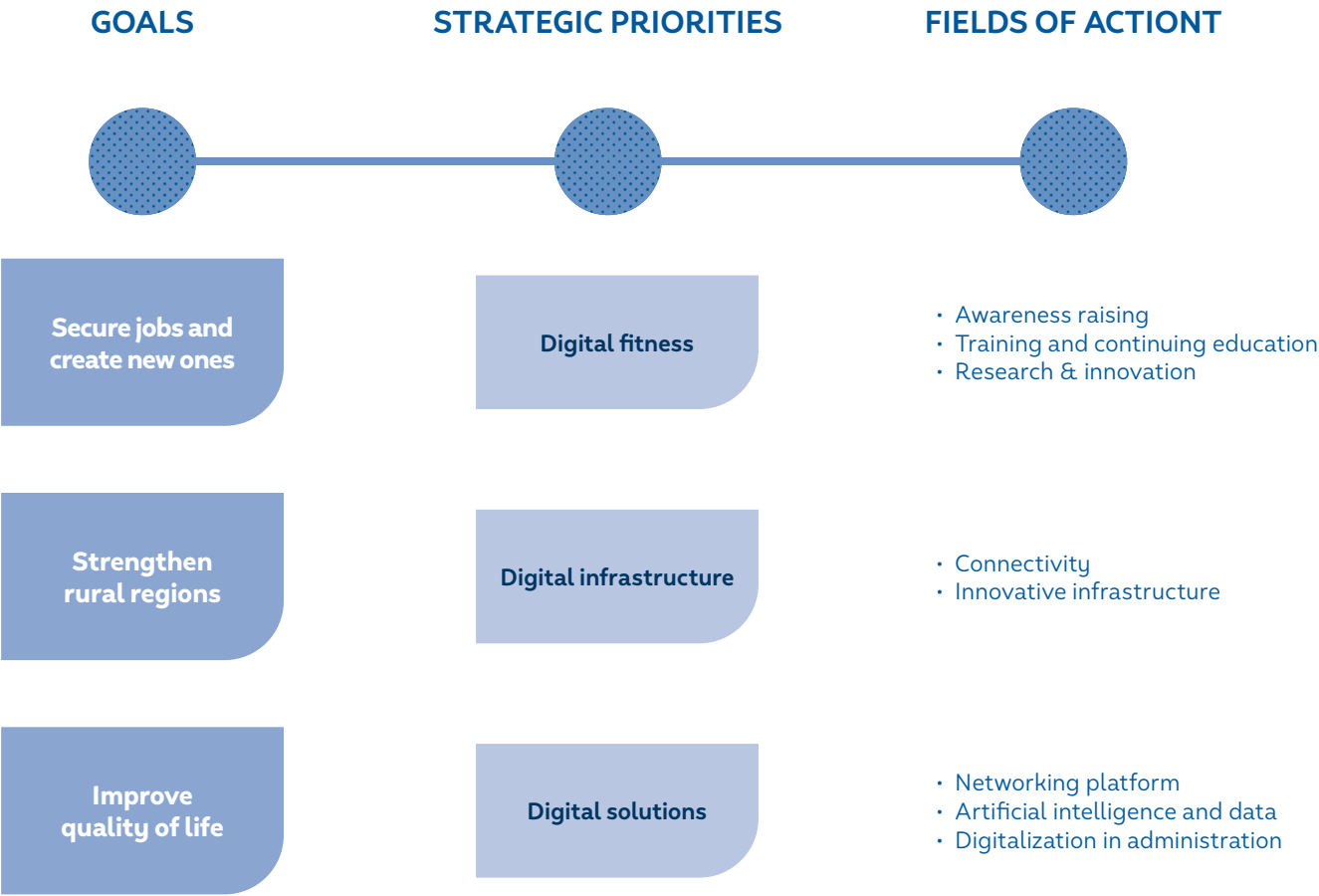


# THE DIGITALIZATION STRATEGY

Digitalization means thinking differently. Lower Austria is using the opportunities provided by digitalization to shape the future and position itself in the world.

## Our mission:

Using the digital transformation. For our state and our people.



## Our foundation

The ongoing digital transformation requires a holistic approach to issues that affect all goals, strategic priorities and fields of action equally. In line with this strategy, and alongside technological advancement, people are at the center of all our efforts. Security, empowerment and people as the central driving force form the guiding principles for responsible and future-oriented digital transformation.

A key element is strengthening security and resilience in the digital space. There is greater connection between administration, business and society, which is also increasing the significance of cybersecurity and the need for clear security standards. The aim is to protect digital infrastructures, data and applications against threats in the best way possible and, at the same time, also secure the functionality of central systems in crisis and exceptional situations.

Digital resilience is thus a significant factor for creating trust and ensuring that the state's digital activities are stable and reliable.

It is also closely connected with the goal of digital sovereignty. Lower Austria aims to manage and operate key digital resources, data and critical infrastructures autonomously as far as possible. This will strengthen independence, increase data security and create room for maneuver in the long term. The state's own IT infrastructure, such as a state-owned data center, plays an important role here and establishes the foundation for responsible, secure and transparent handling of digital solutions.

*Technological innovation should support people, enable participation and create trust.*

Lower Austria's digitalization strategy is also oriented towards the principles of digital ethics. Digitalization is consistently conceived and designed with a human-centered approach. In the spirit of digital humanism, people's needs, rights and dignity are at the heart of all digital development. Technological innovation should support people, enable participation and create trust. Transparency, fairness and a sense of responsibility are guiding principles for the use of digital technologies in administration, business and society.

These overarching themes serve as a unifying foundation across all goals, strategic priorities and fields of action, and play a key role in shaping digitalization in Lower Austria in a sustainable, secure and empowered manner that is in the best interests of the people.



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# THREE GOALS – THREE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES – EIGHT FIELDS OF ACTION

## The goals

Digitalization and the associated solutions and applications open up new opportunities and perspectives – for the regions, society, businesses and institutions.

The digitalization strategy and the associated projects and measures pursue three long-term goals:

Secure jobs  
and create  
new ones

Strengthen  
rural regions

Improve  
quality of life



© Klaus Ranger

### SECURE JOBS AND CREATE NEW ONES

Jobs can be secured and expanded through digital innovation, further training activities, new business models or start-ups in the high-tech sector. The establishment of the House of Digitalization drives forward these opportunities through networking, ongoing information and raising awareness. Targeted measures support small and medium-sized companies with their digital transformation. They also strengthen digital literacy through interactive formats, exhibitions, discussion panels and training offers for all age groups. This helps to secure existing jobs and create new employment opportunities. The digitalization strategy and the associated projects and measures pursue three long-term goals:

### Example: secure jobs and create new ones

The Lower Austrian bakery Hager uses data and AI-supported applications as part of a digitalization project. Automating order processes based on intelligent forecasts and seamlessly integrating these into the existing IT infrastructure significantly optimizes production and store planning. Shortages and excess production can be avoided and reliable data is used to make operating decisions. At the same time, automated processes make it easier to label ingredients, nutritional values and prices in line with legal requirements. The central control processes improve the collaboration between stores, reduce excess stocks and help to alleviate food waste. More efficient processes and targeted investments in digital literacy secure regional jobs and develop new qualification profiles in companies.

**STRENGTHEN RURAL REGIONS**

Rural regions are to be strengthened by gradually expanding infrastructures and implementing new services that will only be possible through digitalization.

**Example: strengthen rural regions**

As part of the digital literacy initiative, "Digital Überall" ("digital everywhere") workshops took place in over 200 Lower Austrian municipalities. Originally planned for educational institutions, Lower Austria also piloted the workshops in five municipalities in places such as clubhouses or public houses. This pioneering project shows how digital services can also be used to strengthen location-independent working in rural regions.



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**IMPROVE QUALITY OF LIFE**

The quicker and improved use of artificial intelligence and data can optimize countless services, for example in the area of healthcare. These technologies are also being increasingly used in security-relevant administrative areas. Data-driven models for flood forecasting and AI-powered systems for automated damage documentation are making administrative processes faster and more accurate. Digital twins of bodies of water improve forecasts and quality assurance, while mobile AI applications can quickly record damage to infrastructures. These digital solutions increase security, speed up processes and make a long-term contribution to the quality of life in Lower Austria.

**Example: improve quality of life**

Digital solutions such as "Support management for people with disabilities" streamline end-to-end digital processes in application processing and provide greater transparency for the people affected. The health portal for acute care hospital and nursing centers enables fast digital access to information and services such as appointment management, reduces organizational hurdles and strengthens the active involvement of patients and residents in their care. These two examples represent central spheres of life in which digital solutions can have a direct impact.

**The strategic priorities**

To achieve the digitalization goals, it is important that people, businesses and the public sector are fit for digitalization, the necessary infrastructure is comprehensively expanded and continually upgraded and solutions are driven forward. A variety of measures have been developed to achieve this. Further measures are added on a regular basis.

Digital fitness

Digital infrastructure

Digital solutions

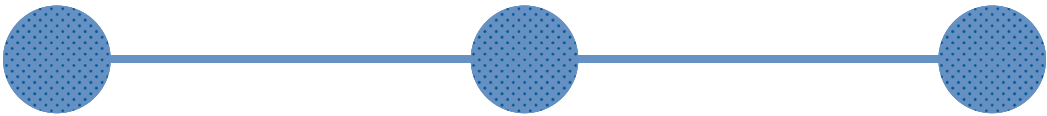


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Digital fitness

This strategic priority aims to get people interested in new technologies, use them and know how to handle them. Companies should use the technologies for business models, solutions, processes and products and also develop new technologies. The public sector uses new technologies for carrying out work processes and they also make it easier for companies and the population to access competences and services.

The measures for this strategic priority are included in three fields of action:



Field of action: awareness raising

Society, companies and the public sector have the opportunity to focus on the issue of digitalization and assume digital autonomy. At the Science Center Lower Austria, digital technologies are clearly communicated, for example in the House of Digitalization. In workshops and interactive formats, children, adolescents and adults can acquire practical skills in areas such as coding, robotics, AR/VR and artificial intelligence. This awakens interest and strengthens digital literacy at an early stage.

Field of action: training and continuing education

Digital literacy is strengthened in a targeted manner across all phases of life. The “Digitalks on Tour” format brings practical further training offers for SMEs directly into the regions. The themes range from artificial intelligence in marketing to AI agents in action and their specific use in daily working life.

Field of action: research and innovation

The development of new digital possibilities through technological product, process or organizational innovations is supported. Companies and research institutions link up and develop strong cooperations. Relevant thematic fields include the Internet of Things, Big Data or artificial intelligence. In addition, the existing competences in Lower Austria relating to cybersecurity, augmented and virtual reality, smart materials, 3D printing and new business models as well as digital services are strengthened. The House of Digitalization acts as a central hub for networking, research and communication.

*The “digital fitness” measures can be used to secure jobs and create new ones.*



House of Digitalization as an important driver for digital fitness

The House of Digitalization makes a significant contribution to enhancing digital fitness in Lower Austria. As the visible hub and umbrella brand for digitalization, it brings together the state’s activities, content, and offerings and makes the digitalization strategy tangible for both businesses and people. It implements the strategy’s goal of actively shaping the digital transformation and making it accessible to the state and its people.

There are two main areas of focus. On the one hand, the House of Digitalization supports SMEs in particular with their digital transformation. On the other hand, it raises awareness among the wider population and strengthens the understanding of digital technologies, digitalization and artificial intelligence in all age groups. Both areas of focus are closely linked and are complemented by the issue of cybersecurity to promote responsible and secure handling of digital technologies.

The House of Digitalization in Tulln offers a multimedia exhibition that clearly explains current and future digitalization topics. Interactive exhibitions in the showroom enable people to experience digitalization firsthand. Innovative digitalization projects from throughout Lower Austria form the core of the exhibitions and are brought to life for visitors. The House of Digitalization is therefore a display window for regional innovations and a place for exchanges in the areas of business, research, administration and society.

A further focus is practical formats for companies. Workshops, events and targeted training offerings help companies to integrate digital technologies and applications into their business models and processes. One such example are AI workshops during which possible applications for artificial intelligence are introduced and companies are supported in recognizing and implementing opportunities. This offer is supplemented by roadshows that bring digital content directly to the regions and thus have an impact outside of Tulln.

The ecoplus House of Digitalization is also a central networking platform. The organization’s network and initiatives such as DIHost enable companies, start-ups, research institutions and partner organizations to connect with one another. This gives rise to new partnerships, learning spaces, and opportunities for innovation that strengthen digital literacy throughout the state. Looking ahead, the House of Digitalization is evolving into a platform with nationwide influence.

Based on the experience and offerings in Lower Austria, the role of the House of Digitalization will, in future, be strengthened throughout Austria and at the European level. It has already been highlighted by the European Commission as a European model of excellence for raising awareness and providing specific support to small and medium-sized enterprises in the area of digitalization. It has helped to position Lower Austria as an active shaper of digital transformation and a reliable partner in digital Europe.

Overall, the House of Digitalization plays a significant role in ensuring that digital fitness will become established in Lower Austria in the long term. It combines information, training, networking and visibility, and creates an open space where digitalization is understood, learned, and further developed in a collaborative manner.

## Digital infrastructure

This strategic priority will close the broadband service gaps. A comprehensive infrastructure is a necessary basic requirement for using new technologies. All stakeholders in Lower Austria will therefore receive access to stable data and power grids. The stated objectives of the digitalization strategy must be taken into account in future infrastructure-related strategies.

The measures for this strategic priority are included in two fields of action:



### Field of action: connectivity

Internet access and improved telephony through a well-developed and affordable digital infrastructure should be ensured and continually improved for society and companies. The gradual expansion of the necessary infrastructures will establish the basic requirements for digital solutions and services as well as ideal connections.

### Field of action: intelligent infrastructure

Digitalization opportunities will improve existing infrastructures. Data has been recognized as a central resource and will be used to manage networks intelligently with due consideration of data security and data sovereignty.

Data centers are an important foundation for further digitalization. In Lower Austria, these are being developed in a targeted manner so that digital capabilities are balanced with the responsible use of valuable resources such as land, water and energy, as well as a high quality of life.

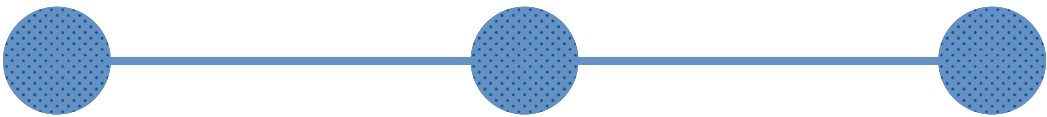
*“Digital infrastructure” measures will strengthen rural regions and further improve the quality of life in Lower Austria.*

*The necessary infrastructure has been comprehensively expanded and is undergoing continuous improvement.*

Digital solutions

Digital solutions play a role in considerably improving and simplifying processes and communication. They will enable companies – especially SMEs and start-ups – to develop new, customer-focused services and products. Public administration in Lower Austria will continue to be deeply involved in the digital transformation and is leading the way by setting a good example and creating added value for society.

The measures for this strategic priority are included in three fields of action:



Field of action:  
networking platforms

Networking on specific questions among businesses, public administration and educational and research institutions as well as the general public will be intensified. This can lead to new developments and cooperations such as the structured collaboration between business, administration and science as part of the “Data Space 4 Local Resource Management” EU project and through the joint use of data and digital platforms.

Field of action:  
artificial intelligence and data

The administration facilitates access to and use of data, also with the involvement of artificial intelligence. This supports research as well as helping companies to develop new business models. The possibility to analyze data using artificial intelligence will improve the quality of services for and in society in the long term. A specific example of this is the AI laboratory at the University of Applied Sciences St. Pölten (USTP), where new AI applications are tested and further developed under real conditions in the AIR Lab.

Field of action:  
digitalization in administration

Innovation, digital solutions, and the targeted use of artificial intelligence based on an independent infrastructure are consistently developed and implemented within the administration. Digital services and AI-powered applications – such as AI-assisted report generation – increase the efficiency of administrative processes and improve the service quality for citizens. A legal framework for the digital age and optimized processes form the foundation for this. In the future, a central platform will serve as a digital interface connecting the public, businesses and municipalities.

*The “digital solution” measures will strengthen regional companies and further improve digital administration in Lower Austria.*



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## INDICATORS AND GOVERNANCE

**Lower Austria is opening up new spaces and new ways of thinking.**

Digitalization will be an ongoing matter for the state of Lower Austria over the coming years. Alongside the implementation of the defined fields of action, it is also necessary to continually develop the strategy.

The "good governance" process is overseen by the Governor of Lower Austria with the involvement of relevant stakeholders. The Digitalization and Innovation Unit, which will oversee the activities required for mobilization, networking and coordination, will provide operational assistance with the process. Relevant measures needed for achieving the goals in the different fields of action will be developed on the basis of this strategy.

For example, one goal is to develop a gigabit-capable broadband infrastructure throughout Lower Austria by 2030.

The aim is also to double the number of students and graduates from ICT programs and degree courses with a digitalization focus, and to significantly increase the number of ICT specialists on the labor market. Thematic, interdisciplinary working groups regularly focus on implementation and discuss individual developments. All the important activities and measures are documented as a progress report and made available in the digital display window of the House of Digitalization. The implementation of the measures and their impact will be evaluated periodically. The process is guided and supported through cooperation and collaboration with universities.

*To monitor the achievement of the goals, reliable indicators based on the Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI) and regional DESI (regional digitalization monitoring) will be used for evaluating and further developing the strategy.*



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