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Economy meets Politics in a Digital World

During the Slovenian Presidency of the Council of the EU 2021

Energy Transition
Infrastructure and Financial Challenges
for the Countries of the VEF Region

Monday, 22 November 2021, 9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. (CET)
House of Industry (Federation of Austrian Industries), Vienna



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- ***Digital transformation and Digital Transformation drivers?***
 - A huge new remote workforce has completely transformed global businesses. In record time, leaders in their organization had to create an environment in which employees could operate “normally” from any device, anytime, anywhere.
 - The challenges posed by the pandemic have been a call for companies to make an immediate digital transformation. Aspects of working life, such as employee involvement, invoice processing, and teamwork management, were much easier to do in a single physical space. However, the pandemic has forced companies to adapt quickly to the new work environment and be much more adaptable to the needs of employees. The development of an internal structure that allows employees to work smoothly and securely from anywhere is now essential.
 - As a result, tools that facilitate collaboration separately prove to be a useful investment for companies of all sizes and industries. Since the start of the pandemic, there has been a significant increase in clouds, cybersecurity and digital investment to ensure business continuity and productivity of dispersed groups.

- Operating in a distributed environment requires new knowledge and tools, therefore **cloud management solutions and automation technologies have made an important contribution to ensuring business continuity**. These solutions can be deployed locally, in the cloud, or in hybrid environments. Intuitive tools and solutions like these can free up groups of administrative, manual tasks, such as managing long email chains, multiple versions of key documents, and constant status queries.
- ***THE ROLE OF DIGITALIZATION IN BUSINESS ENTREPRENEURSHIP***
 - According to statistics, global consumption of paper and cardboard in 2018 increased to almost 422 million tons. This is not to say that every use of paper is bad, but it is an indication of **how much we still rely on paper** and need better access to the data stored on it.
 - In the business and public sectors, information stored on paper is often needed again **after first use**. Patient records need to be highlighted, curricula rearranged, and customer campaigns refreshed. This means that, ideally, the information should be easy to access and share.
 - The need for all valuable data stored on paper to be **easily used, stored, accessed, shared - and protected for legal** and uninterrupted purposes - points to digitization as the ideal answer. One of the best and easiest ways to digitize paper information is to use **a smart document scanner** that can store scanned documents in the cloud, name them automatically, and file them in the correct predefined location.

- Business continuity plans are not necessarily complicated. The year 2021 will show most companies where their shortcomings are and what steps they may need to take to better protect their future. If part of this plan is to protect and increase the versatility and usability of data stored on paper, investing in document scanning can only be a misleadingly simple but crucial key step that was missing.
- ***What trends do we see?***
 - The year behind us has been turbulent, leading to a shift in how we interact with each other. While the effects of the pandemic will last, 2021 will be a year of transition, as businesses are starting to look forward to shaping their futures and build agility into their working practices. These **circumstances have accelerated the need for digital transformation** and the trend is likely to continue. Remote working has become a reality for most workers, pushing companies to **adapt their processes and workflows** and ensure continuity of their business. They need to operate productively, collaboratively and work securely from anywhere.
 - With its advanced technologies/solutions and expertise, Canon is already supporting **hybrid workspaces with a connected, automated, and secure working environment**. We have the experience and expertise to guide you on swift digital transformation journeys whilst continuing to make an existing document and content environment more efficient, less costly, and more compliant.

- *How do we see the potential for next coming years? What opportunities do we see?*
 - Overall, Western Balkan seems to be at a **good level for digital transformation and indeed has some major strengths**: a high level of technical education, especially for **young people, good digital know-how, a lively start-up scene**, and fewer issues with legacy systems. There is considerable potential for Western Balkan to use digital technologies to accelerate economic catch-up with Western Europe.
 - The growing innovation ecosystem of the Western Balkans can also be a critical resource for recovery from the crisis, providing solutions in various areas. Thus, new programs can be rolled out, incentivizing start-ups to develop innovative products or services intended to overcome the economic, health, and societal effects of the pandemic.

