Question for written answer E-005211/2021 to the Commission
Rule 138
Josianne Cutajar (S&D)

Subject: The internet as a human right

Access to the internet has been a key factor in making our society and economy more resilient during the emergency phase of the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, internet access for all – individuals and businesses alike – will underpin a successful digital transition, with transformational effects for society.

Individuals will rely on the internet for healthcare, education, work and many other aspects of their daily lives: this is the reason why inclusive access to the internet should be considered a right itself, as a crucial condition for enabling other people’s rights and ensuring long-lasting economic development.

In March 2021, the Commission committed to achieve the European Digital Decade through a policy programme put forward in September 2021 and a joint interinstitutional solemn Declaration of Digital Principles.

In July 2021, the UN Human Rights Council stressed in a resolution ‘the importance of applying a human-rights-based approach when providing and expanding access to the internet’.

Against this backdrop, is the Commission ready to consider access to the internet as a human right and what initiatives does it plan to undertake in this regard?