

**United Nations Development Programme  
and EIB identify effective digital  
response to COVID-19 in Africa**



# Africa's digital solutions to tackle COVID-19

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The new report published today by the EIB, UNDP and BearingPoint '[Africa's digital solutions to tackle COVID-19](#)' highlights how proven digital innovation can be replicated to curb the spread of COVID-19 in Africa. It

also estimates investment required to implement such high impact solutions.

[Ambroise Fayolle](#), European Investment Bank's Vice-President responsible for innovation and development, said: *"The global development community is united to support Africa at this time of need. The European Investment Bank is pleased to join forces with UNDP and BearingPoint to identify smart and cost-effective technological investment that can increase the resilience of African countries to COVID-19. In the coming days we will host discussions amongst policy and business leaders from across Africa to enable practical and proven solutions to be shared. This ground-breaking report complements the EIB's accelerated financial and technical response to support COVID-19 related health and economic resilience investment across Africa as part of Team Europe. The digital solutions presented in this study are good examples of investment that we intend to support together with our partners."*

*"This paper comes at a time when Africa has demonstrated leadership in digital innovations in the area of financial technologies replicated across the world, such as mobile money. Building on this progress, it is time to invest more aggressively in digital capabilities for the socioeconomic transformation of Africa,"* said Ahunna Eziakonwa, UNDP Assistant Administrator and Regional Director for Africa.

In Africa, the COVID-19 pandemic is disrupting millions of people's livelihoods, with disproportionate impact on poor households and small businesses. This creates urgency to secure supplies of essential products, contain the spread of the virus, support health systems, stabilise financial systems and help businesses to survive.

### **Sharing digital solutions amongst African partners**

The EIB and UNDP analysis shows that African countries can quickly launch powerful digital projects to better tackle the pandemic. ICT solutions presented in the report cover a broad range of key policy challenges, including crisis management coordination, by helping medical personnel, enabling to anticipate and control the spread of the virus, supporting the poor communities and assisting governments to better communicate.

The survey reviewed more than 100 digital solutions in Europe and Africa and interviewed 50 respondents from 30 African countries in charge of coordinating digital investments related to the COVID-19 outbreak.

### **Broad range of digital solutions already improving lives across Africa**

Pioneering and innovative digital solutions identified as offering easy to implement and affordable solutions include a telephone based application for contact-tracing in Kenya, drones spreading messages in rural areas in Ivory Coast and delivering samples to medical laboratories in Ghana and Rwanda, a self-diagnosis application available in 15 African countries, an online learning platform in Tanzania for students and teachers in secondary schools, a platform to organise and monitor food and non-food distribution to the poorest people, as well as a system to map the effects and responses to the COVID-19 pandemic through social media data.

## **Survey estimates financing needed for digital solutions to improve COVID-19 response**

The study reveals that investment needed to implement ICT solutions is not massive compared to other development programmes and financing initiatives, and has the capacity to generate tremendous benefits in terms of saving life and safeguarding economic and social resilience. Global investment required to carry out these digital solutions in the 30 African countries studied has been estimated at €680 million in the first year.

**Read the report:** [Africa's digital solutions to tackle COVID-19](#)

**Participate in a webinar (held in French) to know more about the study report on 24 July 2020 – 15:00 (CEST):**

<https://app.livestorm.co/bearingpoint/evaluation-des-besoins-dinvestissement-dans-les-infrastructures-numeriques-en-afrique-face-au-covid-19>.

### **Background information**

#### **About the European Investment Bank**

The EIB is present in more than 160 countries and has been active across Africa since 1963. The EU Bank is among the leading financiers on the continent, supporting private and public sector projects.

#### **About the United Nations Development Programme**

UNDP is the leading United Nations organization fighting to end the injustice of poverty, inequality, and climate change. Working with our broad network of experts and partners in 170 countries, we help nations to build integrated, lasting solutions for people and planet.

Learn more at [undp.org](http://undp.org) or follow at @UNDP.

UNDP's collaboration with EIB complements the Tech Access Partnership, launched by the United Nations Technology Bank, together with UNDP, UNCTAD and WHO, as part of a coordinated approach to strengthen developing countries' responses to COVID-19 and increase access to lifesaving health technologies.

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**[Press release – Future EU financing and recovery: MEPs to assess summit outcome](#)**



To wind up the extraordinary plenary debate, [scheduled from 9:30-12:30](#), MEPs will adopt, on the same day, a resolution on the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), an Own Resources system and a Recovery Plan for Europe.

Commenting on the [outcome of the European Council meeting](#) of Heads of States or Governments from 17-21 July in Brussels, the President of the European Parliament David Sassoli [said on Tuesday](#): “After days of discussions, European citizens expect an agreement that lives up to this historical moment. We are worried about a future where European solidarity and the Community method are lost. The European Parliament has set out its priorities and it expects them to be met. The multiannual financial framework must be able to address the main challenges facing Europe in the medium term, such as the Green Deal, digitalisation, economic resilience, and the fight against inequalities.”

“New own resources are needed immediately. We also need measures to ensure the effective defence of the rule of law. Furthermore, Parliament has repeatedly called for the end of rebates. If these conditions are not sufficiently met, the European Parliament will not give its consent. COVID-19 is still here and we are seeing new outbreaks in Europe. More than ever it is necessary to act quickly and courageously.”

Follow the plenary live [on EbS](#) or the [European Parliament's webstream](#).

### Next steps

The Council will now finalise its mandate to enter negotiations with Parliament on the planned MFF for 2021-2027, own resources reform and the recovery plan. Parliament will [have a final say](#) on the MFF before it can enter into force. The current multiannual budget runs out on 31 December 2020.

MEPs will set out their conditions in Thursday's plenary resolution. The [EP's](#)

[negotiating team](#) will take up negotiations with the [German Presidency of the Council of the EU](#) as soon as possible.

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## **EASO publishes a new COI report on Afghanistan: ‘Criminal law, customary justice and informal dispute resolution’**

On 22 July 2020, the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) published a Country of Origin Information (COI) report titled '[Afghanistan – Criminal law, customary justice and informal dispute resolution](#)'.

The newly released report provides an overview of the pluralistic legal system of codified and uncodified, formal and informal (customary) norms which govern Afghan society. The report also focusses on the topic of land dispute as one of the main sources of conflict in Afghanistan, providing information on formal and informal mechanism of dispute resolution, including Taliban's involvement in resolving land disputes. Finally, it describes the practices of blood feuds and revenge killing, including customary blood feud resolution and compensation, and prosecution by the state.

In Afghanistan, justice is administered on the basis of a mixture of overlapping and sometimes contradictory legal codes, which include the 2004 Constitution, international law, statutory law, *sharia* law, and customary (informal, traditional) law. Many disputes, ranging from disagreements over land to criminal acts, are settled outside of the formal court system, in informal institution such as local *jirgas* and *shuras*. Punishment is largely based on the concept of retribution and the type of punishment can differ significantly, but typically it is decided in a manner that is equal to how the perpetrator injured the victim. In territories under their control, the Taliban continued to operate a parallel judicial system, based on a strict interpretation of *sharia*. In the past years, Taliban courts have become significantly widespread and they are also reported to reach far beyond Taliban-held areas.

The report was drafted by EASO COI Sector in accordance with the [EASO COI Report Methodology](#). It was reviewed by experts from The Netherlands, Office for Country Information and Language Analysis, Ministry of Justice.

At the end of 2019, with 2.7 million refugees, Afghanistan was the [third largest country of origin of refugees in the world](#). Afghan continued to be the second most common citizenship of asylum applicants in the EU+ as of May 2020.

The EASO COI report 'Afghanistan – Criminal law, customary justice and informal dispute resolution' is the first in a series of reports on Afghanistan due to be published between July and September 2020.

Photo: © ResoluteSupportMedia

## Greece: EIB backs 826 MW Mytilineos power plant to support energy transition



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- EIB agrees EUR 125m financing for EUR 322m power plant
- Key security of energy supply in context of closure of all lignite power generation in Greece
- Investment provides flexible generation to support growing share of intermittent renewables in the Greek electricity network.
- Project backed by the European Union under EFSI guarantee.

The European Investment Bank has agreed to support construction of a new power plant in Greece by Mytilineos S.A.

The new 826 MW CCGT Agios Nikolaos power plant will allow greater use of renewable energy resources in the country and enable the phasing out of lignite power generation in Greece by 2023, as well as supply long-term energy demand.

“The importance and vision of the Agios Nikolaos power plant to contribute to a cleaner energy future for Greece has been recognised by EIB’s first ever loan to Mytilineos. The new long-term EIB loan, shows how the EU Bank supports transformational investment in this country.” said Evangelos Mytilineos, Chairman and CEO of Mytilineos SA.

“The European Investment Bank has unique technical and financial expertise in the energy sector and is a valuable partner to enable Greece to deliver on climate goals and move away from lignite use by 2028. We welcome the EIB’s recognition of the importance of supporting the energy transition in Greece and the new support for the Agios Nikolaos facility.” said Christos Staikouras, Minister of Finance of the Hellenic Republic and Governor of the European Investment Bank.

“The European Investment Bank is supporting energy transition in Greece. As part of the EIB Energy Lending Policy agreed in 2019, we committed to supporting a pipeline of gas projects already under appraisal, before moving to renewables-only lending from 2021. That’s why EIB is pleased to provide EUR 125 million to Mytilineos S.A. to support Greece’s energy security. The EIB looks forward to working together with Mytilienos and other leading energy project partners to support future clean energy investment across Greece.” said Andrew McDowell, European Investment Bank Vice President responsible for lending operations in Greece.

### **European financial backing**

The EIB will provide a EUR 125 million 8 year loan to finance construction and connection of the new EUR 322m plant at Agios Nikolaos Viotias in central Greece alongside an existing energy generation center and industrial site.

The EIB loan is guaranteed by the European Union under the Investment Plan for Europe.

### **Crucial investment in the context of lignite power plant closures and expansion of renewable energy in Greece**

Once operational the new 826 MW natural gas CCGT plant will contribute to ensuring sufficient generation capacity to support the shut down of all - except one- lignite power plants in Greece by 2023. Lignite currently accounts for 4 GW of power generation in Greece, 22% of total capacity in the country.

The Agios Nikolaos plant will also provide flexibility to allow greater use of intermittent wind and solar power in the future and enable increased electricity network interconnection between mainland Greece and the islands.

The new plant will be the most efficient gas power plant in Greece and use state of the art CCGT technology. The new investment by Mytilineos S.A. will



also help to diversify power generation in Greece and increase competition in the energy sector.

### **Environmental monitoring and public consultation**

The project promoter will monitor environmental impact of the facility during construction and initial operation. This will include specialist monitoring of aquatic fauna in the Gulf of Corinth close to the site.

Prior to government consent being granted for the project a detailed public consultation exercise involved regional authorities, local community and stakeholders. No negative opinion was expressed in the scheme by stakeholders or interested parties.

### **EIB energy lending review**

The new Agios Nikolaos power plant is expected to generate absolute carbon emissions of 320 gCO<sub>2</sub> / kWh.

This is within the European Investment Bank's emission performance standard of 550 gCO<sub>2</sub> / kWh in place when the project was approved.

Since the EIB board approved the project the EIB has introduced a new Energy Lending Policy that will end all financing for unabated fossil-fuel power generation by the end of 2021.

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**[Security and crimes: Europeans worry about online banking fraud, data misuse and terrorist attacks](#)**



The '[Your rights matter: Security concerns and experiences](#)' paper looks at people's security concerns and their worries about experiencing certain crimes. The results show:

- **Data** – most people (55%) are worried about their online data being misused by fraudsters or criminals.

Respondents in Spain (76%), Czechia (69%) and the United Kingdom (67%) worry the most about their data, compared to people in Romania (34%), Croatia, Hungary and Bulgaria (all 37%).

At the same time, a third of the population (30%) is worried about their data being used by foreign governments.

- **Online banking fraud** – a quarter of Europeans (24%) is very worried that their online bank account or payment card details will be misused. This is 57% in Spain.

Overall, fewer than 1 in 10 (8%) experienced online banking or card fraud in the five years before the survey. However, people in the UK (24%), France (19%) and Denmark (15%) are more likely to have such an experience.

- **Terrorism** – a fifth of the population (19%) is very worried about experiencing a terrorist attack. In Spain, over half (52%) fears a terrorist attack compared to 3% in Ireland.
- **Harassment** – 2 in 5 people (38%) have experienced in-person harassment in the last 5 years compared to 14% who have experienced it online.

In France (58%), the Netherlands (55%), Austria (53%), Germany (53%), Finland (52%), the United Kingdom (52%), Belgium (50%), half the population or more has experienced in-person harassment.

Cyber-harassment is more common among young people and students. It has been the highest in Germany (23%), France (22%) and Finland (19%).

The survey results also show that people with lower education, who are unemployed or experience difficulties to make ends meet are more worried about experiencing crimes.

#### **Background information:**

The paper is one of a series of thematic publications looking at people's views and experiences of fundamental rights.

In this series, FRA has already published a report on '[What do fundamental rights mean for people in the EU?](#)' and a paper on '[Data protection and privacy](#)'.

The findings draw on responses to [FRA's Fundamental Rights Survey](#) from 35,000 people across all EU Member States, North Macedonia and the United Kingdom.

The survey ran from January to October 2019.

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