

# Europe - United states - Digital affairs

## 18 months of unapologetic radicalisation

A New Geopolitical Landscape for America and the World

From Shock to Strategic Urgency for Europe



PÔLE D'EXCELLENCE  
**CYBER**

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On March 6, 2025, we published a first op-ed titled “Trump: A Salutory Shock!”<sup>1</sup>.

It is clear that since Donald Trump’s return to the White House, the situation has crystallized into increasingly uncertain and violent power dynamics.

Digital technology is at the heart of this new form of global confrontation; it is not just about a liberal economic vision of the world, but a profound challenge to the societal model, from the protection of the youngest to democratic values.

Digital supremacy allows for narratives detached from reality, all kinds of interference, or falsifications of truth by those who wield it.

The United States is now openly embracing power politics; Trump’s radical project now relies on an approach qualified as “techno-fascism” by some observers, including Gérard Araud, one of our former ambassadors to Washington. He observed this evolution firsthand from the first term and the birth of the doctrines that led to this situation; it is unfolding before us in a totally unapologetic manner.

Asma Mhalla’s analyses shed light on this dynamic from an even broader perspective. **The techno-fascism she describes is not an accidental drift, but a structured political project, where technology becomes an instrument of domination, surveillance, and social control**<sup>2</sup>. In this configuration, technological dependence is never neutral: it conditions the ability of states to decide freely, protect their citizens, and preserve an autonomous democratic space.

This transformation of the “Make America Great Again” movement, which researcher Olivier Alexandre describes as a “techno-oligarchy” where Silicon Valley elites ally with anti-system discourse<sup>3</sup>, is no longer just about communication.

It constitutes a form of “connective action,”<sup>4</sup> to use the term coined by scholars such as Christopher S. Parker, **transforming digital infrastructure into an instrument of identity-based mobilisation and geopolitical leverage**. This alliance between radicalism and technological power places an institutionally fragile Europe in urgent need of a coordinated strategic and political response.

Let us no longer be fooled! Let’s stop burying our heads in the sand! Let’s face what this American turnaround, conceptualized over the past few years and implemented before our eyes, truly means.

While it may be fashionable to engage in “French and European bashing,” highlighting only our slowness and weaknesses, saying that all is lost or too late, that the “technological Grail” lies in the top right of the Gartner chart... **It is time to change our perspective, react, and turn MAGA into a trigger and an opportunity to finally “make Europe.”**

1 - <https://www.pole-excellence-cyber.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Quel-chemin-pour-conquerir-notre-Autonomie-Strategique-Numerique-1-1.pdf>

2 - Mhalla A, Cyberpunk. Le nouveau système totalitaire, Paris : Seuil, septembre 2025, 208 p. Futuribles, n° 470(1), 115-118. <https://doi.org/10.3917/futur.470.0115>

3 - Hadjadj, N. (2025, July 19). Techno-oligarchie x MAGA 2.0 : la coalition trumpiste analysée par Olivier Alexandre. Synth. <https://synthmedia.fr/entretiens/techno-oligarchie-x-maga-2-0-la-coalition-trumpiste-analysee-par-olivier-alexandre/>

4 - Parker, C,S, and Rachel M.B, ‘Exploring the Motivations of the MAGA Movement’, in Steven Livingston, and Michael Miller (eds), Connective Action and the Rise of the Far-Right: Platforms, Politics, and the Crisis of Democracy (New York, 2025; online edn, Oxford Academic, 19 June 2025), <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780197794937.003.0008>. accessed 27 Jan. 2026.

Let's quote Jean-Dominique Giuliani in his editorial for the Schuman Institute on February 6, 2026:  
*"Europe, the last obstacle for the coalition of autocrats."*

*Europe embodies a moral force, one that finds its origin in the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen of 1789, in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 within the UN, and in the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, with its supranational Court of Justice that tolerates no breach of the proclaimed rights, to the point that it is criticized for its broad interpretation of them. Perhaps also because, with a culture and experiences spanning more than a millennium, it has chosen peace among its members, negotiation, and dialogue between nations, which has allowed it to build the world's second-largest economy and become a beacon and an attractive force in the contemporary world."*

Let's also quote President Emmanuel Macron in the preface to the **National Cybersecurity Strategy 2026-2030**:  
*"France cannot be a spectator. It will be there, with strength, with method, with ambition, a sovereign power."*

Within the European Union, it must be acknowledged that consensus among 27 can be complicated. It is therefore necessary to **identify a group of nations that can lead this policy and be its spearhead**, rallying other states to face the lobbying of American companies and their European supporters. If Europe sometimes struggles to move as quickly as it could due to its democratic processes and fragmentation, **for digital issues, it is our only bulwark, hence the importance of mobilization on the subject!**

Europe has formidable assets: a single market of 450 million consumers, world-leading scientific excellence, unique research infrastructures, and an ethical framework that is becoming a global reference. It remains the cradle and guardian of democratic values, at a time when part of the United States is turning its back on them.

Published in September 2024, **Mario Draghi's report** already warned of the delay Europe was taking in strategic sectors. This report advocates for European strategic sovereignty and calls for a **"collective awakening"**<sup>5</sup>.

As Laurence Nardon analyzes, the MAGA movement has made the digital space one of "total disintermediation," where control of attention replaces democratic debate<sup>6</sup>. President Trump and his entourage excel in this. Power struggles are global and increasingly brutal. **Without a strong reaction, Europe will become even more of a digital colony of the United States, increasingly dismembered and plundered.**

The first concrete translation of this awakening must be economic. Faced with American and Chinese actors supported by assumed state strategies, the European Union can no longer afford market neutrality; nations must understand this.

Prioritizing the European market is not a protectionist retreat, but a strategic and political act. Without European public procurement oriented towards European actors, without an assumed community preference in critical sectors, any ambition for sovereignty will remain theoretical, as European companies currently lack the necessary development base in Europe; they desperately need revenue in Europe to develop a competitive offering capable of rallying businesses.

**The single market must become a lever of power**, capable of supporting the emergence of European champions in digital technology, cloud computing, and critical infrastructures, the foundation of AI, quantum computing, and a European digital ecosystem. **Without infrastructure and European data to process, we are building on sand.**

The example of the German group Schwarz Digital with **STACKIT**, the German "sovereign" cloud of Lidl, is particularly instructive; possessing massive amounts of data, they chose to develop new business verticals rather than let this black gold slip away from Europe, going far beyond mere IAAS/PAAS to prioritize their "Market Place."

5 - Chaaban, F. (2025, November 19). Qu'est-ce que le rapport Draghi sur l'avenir de la compétitivité de l'UE ? [Touteleurope.eu. https://www.toutteleurope.eu/economie-et-social/qu-est-ce-que-le-rapport-draghi-sur-l-avenir-de-la-competitivite-de-l-ue/](https://www.toutteleurope.eu/economie-et-social/qu-est-ce-que-le-rapport-draghi-sur-l-avenir-de-la-competitivite-de-l-ue/)

6 - Nardon L, « États-Unis : la liberté d'expression face aux attaques du mouvement MAGA », Chroniques américaines, Ifri, 26 septembre 2025.

These **Infrastructure/Data** requirements are particularly visible in the cloud sector, which has become as much a political infrastructure as a technical one. The massive dependence of European administrations and companies on providers like AWS, Microsoft Azure, or Google Cloud raises the central question of effective data control.

Behind the promise of performance and flexibility lies a structural vulnerability, linked to the **extraterritoriality of American law, primarily the FISA<sup>7</sup>**, but also the Cloud Act, which allow U.S. authorities and intelligence services to access data hosted by American companies, **even when this data is stored in Europe**.

The protection of European data cannot therefore be thought of solely in terms of technical cybersecurity, but as an issue of legal sovereignty, trust, and politics. **The forthcoming EUCS<sup>8</sup>, cloud certification scheme must be complemented by the proposed CADA<sup>9</sup>, (Cloud and AI Development Act), with clear and enforceable provisions addressing extraterritorial exposure.**

**Europe must ensure that access to sensitive data and public markets is conditioned on robust legal guarantees, not merely technical safeguards, while maintaining competitiveness and performance.**

It is precisely on this point that European regulation must evolve. A true European strategy requires fully accounting for the extraterritoriality of American law, by conditioning access to public markets and sensitive data on real legal guarantees—not just declarative ones—and on the use of products certified by European agencies. Regulating without effective control mechanisms means perpetuating a power asymmetry in favor of large non-European platforms.

In this context, the positions defended by Vincent Strubel, Director General of the **The French National Cybersecurity Agency (ANSSI)**, take on particular resonance. Through the French SecNumCloud framework, ANSSI offers not just a technical standard, but a clear political framework. This discourse contrasts with the illusion of sovereignty “through non-sovereign encryption” or “by contract,” reminding us that digital security cannot be separated from the question of applicable law and control of ownership. Europe has chosen a different path: a technical EUCS and an upcoming CADA (Cloud and AI Development Act) to address extraterritoriality and interference.

Europe cannot claim to defend a democratic model if its digital infrastructures rely on power architectures that escape it. In this regard, Gérard Araud's warning is unequivocal: Europe must emerge from its “transatlantic naivety.” For the former diplomat, the MAGA movement marks the end of a protective America in favor of a transactional and brutal power, which sees Europe's digital dependence as an opportunity for vassalization rather than a partnership<sup>10</sup>.

**Europe no longer has the luxury of hesitation: it must either become a technological power or resign itself to being merely a playground for foreign platforms.**

Finally, Mark Carney's speech at Davos, the Canadian Prime Minister on January 20, offers a complementary perspective. He reminds us that economic and democratic resilience depends on long-term investments in sustainable, sovereign infrastructures aligned with clear political values. Building better, for Europe, means building independently, without confusing economic openness with strategic dependence.

The statements made at the Munich Summit in mid-February show that political Europe is reacting, even if divergences persist, particularly between Germany and France.

Faced with the rise of unapologetic techno-fascism, European autonomy can no longer be a slogan. It must become a structuring political project, articulating economic preference, technological mastery, legal protection, and democratic vision.

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7 - Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act

8 - European Union Cybersecurity Certification Scheme for Cloud Services

9 - Cloud and AI Development Act

10 - LCI. (2026, January 9). Donald Trump “veut changer l'ordre du monde”, analyse Gérard Araud - LCI [Video]. [YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5nd8Pk3mRHY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5nd8Pk3mRHY)

Otherwise, Europe risks remaining a regulated but dominated space, caught between powers that have fully understood **that technology is now a political battleground. It is in their interest to keep Europe fragmented into 27 separate markets, easier to influence, economically extract, and strategically subordinate, to plunder their economies and politically subjugate them by installing “controlled” regimes. 27 nations reduced to dependent digital peripheries — whether American, Chinese, Russian or otherwise.**

**It is not Europe that wants a power struggle, but the United States that imposes it!** Some companies even openly announce on social media that their mission is to ensure U.S. supremacy in the digital space... This is far from commercial discourse.

### **So what is to be done? How to mobilize?**

States, even if they display strong ambition as the French National Strategy does, cannot do everything alone; **it is all European actors who must become aware of this new form of war being waged against us Europeans in particular...**

As Sun Tzu famously argued in *The Art of War*, the highest form of victory is to subdue the adversary without fighting.

It is necessary for **opinion leaders, politicians, and major industrialists to become the leaders and relays of this struggle beyond the sole circle of experts** or the digital ecosystem, because we are facing a societal problem and a future challenge for Europe.

The mobilization of Europeans now has a sense of urgency. **We must educate politicians, decision-makers, and business leaders about what digital technology is**, about the importance of controlled infrastructure and data exploited autonomously by European economic actors; this is a vital sector that cannot be entrusted to others.

Let's not be fooled; **let's bring common sense and political vision back into digital technology.** Like Ulysses, let's resist the song of the technological sirens; they do not wish us well but seek to steal our soul.

Sensitive data of the state and citizens remain under **national legal framework; security products certified in Europe** by specialized agencies are prescribed; digital infrastructures, including cloud and data centers, are under **vital importance status** as soon as the information is strategic for innovation or the functioning of the nation (hospitals, transport, local authorities...).

**Talking about a sovereign cloud operated by an American tech company makes no sense...** Yet, some companies announce it without restraint. They cannot resist or go against the injunctions and pressures of their government... It's simple: sovereign means in Europe under a sovereign legal framework without the possibility of interference from a foreign administration, and security products certified by European agencies.

Can a major U.S. technology company realistically defy a binding order from Washington?"

Three levels of analysis must be considered according to sectors, their complexity, acceptability, and timeline to increase strategic autonomy in:

- Storage, transport, and processing of data, metadata, and algorithms;
- Addressing operational risk in the face of a “digital shutdown” ordered by a foreign power;
- Reducing technological dependence.

We must remain masters of “*sensitive data*” but also of “*algorithms that model know-how and the specific operating modes of organizations, where added value and the value that make up the ‘strategic core’ of organizations lie.*” Level 1 is accessible today, level 2 as well, at least over significant periods. Level 3 is a more complex matter.

But we must remain realistic; the redefinition of relations with American technology companies will not happen in the short term.

**Companies and organizations need performance.** In a non-dogmatic and pragmatic way, and at the right level according to sensitivity, **we will have to reconcile the best of sovereignty, the best of security, and the best of performance....**

Prefer, when no equivalent European solution exists, “modules” that can be integrated into a controlled architecture. Nothing prevents us from appropriating these modules to be able to develop them.

**Prefer hosting on clouds certified as far as possible from extraterritoriality. Those that have made the effort to be SecNumCloud, for example,** while not being fooled by those who remain at the level of commercial discourse and lobbying.

**Some are making this choice today! All CIOs must seize it. They are the ones who define the architecture and the use of service providers; they have decision-making power.**

**But also, you, the members of Executive Committees and Boards of Directors,** these digital choices are structuring for the performance and results of your companies, European and national economic developments. Your decisions must be able to rely on informed and global advice and analyses, and an understanding on your part of what digital technology is, without being content to look at only the visible part highlighted in the “marketplaces.” **Digital technology is an iceberg: 5% “marketplace” and 95% invisible base, but which contains the attributes of digital power.**

**What to do? How to act towards Europe?**

Call for **mobilization of our representatives** in Brussels, from other nations, and from our regions to support the actors of the Commission so that they make courageous decisions, particularly in the face of commercial and political lobbying by non-European companies.

**Identify a “core of nations” sharing the same will for digital strategic autonomy** and sovereignty to move forward together and create a strong dynamic in the face of urgency.

**Mobilise European regions** to support and relay this momentum at their own level. In France, Brittany has already embarked on this path.

As soon as possible: implement a **European preference** for regulated markets, protective measures against legal extraterritoriality, and the use of **certified products** in EU and member state projects and tenders to create the conditions for a “domestic” market;

**Promote the emergence of a domestic market** among cyber-consuming companies, in addition to the funding currently mobilized around the **EDF** (European Defense Fund) and the **EIF** (European Investment Fund), because companies primarily need revenue and orders to scale; subsidies help innovation, but it is above all the “order” that makes competitiveness and excellence of offerings.

Encourage and support **initiatives that map at the European level companies** with certified security products and those with a European sovereign approach, in order to both highlight their offerings, but above all to **facilitate the formation of consortia**, particularly of innovative SMEs, to then address the mechanisms of the EDF or the EIF.

The Draghi agenda is a central element of competitiveness; **the creation of a European capital market is a fundamental condition.** Without this competitiveness, the private capital necessary for scale-ups—including European ones—will continue to be invested elsewhere to the detriment of our European companies that have managed to pass the first stage of their development and benefited from innovation subsidies.

**Support and accompany the emergence of a network of national associations or association groups** working for the emergence of a regulated domestic market and sovereignty approaches in cybersecurity and sensitive AI.

**Mobilization around the CADA** currently being drafted to include ambitious and courageous provisions on extraterritoriality, both in terms of data and trusted AI, in the face of foreign service providers who no longer hide their struggle for the digital supremacy of their nation?

**Actions around the EIF** are necessary to make it a **financial lever more oriented towards European sovereignty**, notably through the introduction of binding clauses in the event of a takeover by foreign actors, **the creation of a cyber compartment within the ETCI** (European Tech Champions Initiative), and **support for companies certifying their products** to strengthen the robustness of the supply chain, as well as developing a dynamic towards defense, security, and space with investors funded by the EIF.

**The Digital Omnibus**, which deals with the harmonization of European regulations and directives, must be more readable and its work accelerated: GDPR / NIS2 / DORA / Cyber Act / CRA / DSA / DMA / MICA / Cyber Solidarity. All necessary and well-founded, but what a jungle for companies, especially SMEs.

Finally, I would like to recall the words of Alain Juillet, delivered at a recent conference organised by the Synopia Institute: ***“Understanding reality does not mean giving in to cynicism; it is the necessary precondition for any strategic recovery. The ‘twilight of the weak’ does not signal the sudden collapse of the West or of Europe. It describes the gradual marginalisation of those who refuse to adapt their strategy to the return of power politics.”***

These words shed light on our current situation. The increasingly assertive actions of Donald Trump's administration, including towards its own citizens and economic actors — as illustrated by the pressure exerted on the AI company Anthropic — confront us with reality. Power politics is no longer a hypothesis; it is now openly assumed.

In the face of this evolution, France can and must play a catalytic role by mobilising a circle of willing European states determined to build genuine digital sovereignty.

This does not mean rejecting American technologies. European companies require performance, resilience and security. But these requirements must be embedded within balanced commercial relationships that fully respect European interests.

Building European digital autonomy is an immense undertaking. It requires the determined engagement of political and economic leaders, the emergence of a genuine European domestic market, and the establishment of clear rules governing relations with non-European providers.

**Europe must now face the return of power politics — and respond with lucidity, courage and determination, without delay.**

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