# Angela Merkel needs to create a unified digital strategy in Europe during her Council Presidency

➢ **European Heads of State and Government approach digitization with very different focus**
➢ **Estonia, Germany, France, the Netherlands and Luxembourg are most engaged on the level of Head of State and Government, while Poland, Italy, Bulgaria, Hungary and Slovenia are least engaged**
➢**Key future technologies like Robotics, Quantum Computing or Future Mobility received only little attention by European Heads of State and Government**
➢**Individual engagement profiles reveal: Angela Merkel is focused mostly on digital infrastructure while neglecting Entrepreneurship. Emmanuel Macron puts Artificial Intelligence and Entrepreneurship in the spotlight.**

Digital technologies have different importance throughout Europe. In 2019, Estonia's Jüri Ratas spent more than 5 times more time on the topic than Slovenia's Marjan Sarec or Hungary's Victor Orbán. Also, there is no harmonized European approach on digital technologies, with every country setting its own agenda. Key future technologies, such as Quantum Computing and Robotics, are disregarded by most European Heads of State and Government. This is the result of the Digital Engagement Report 2020 by the European Center for Digital Competitiveness by ESCP Business School in Berlin. The report presents the digital engagement of all 27 European Heads of State and Governments for the year 2019. These engagements include all interactions around digitization based on publicly accessible government information, press releases and personal accounts on the social media platform Twitter. The Digital Engagement Report will be published annually from now on.

The digital Engagement of European Heads of State and Government varies widely. While the top 5 politicians in the ranking had an average of 47 activities linked to digitization in 2019, the bottom 5 only engaged in 12 actions on average during the same time. The most digitally engaged leaders in Europe were

Jüri Ratas, Angela Merkel, Emmanuel Macron, Mark Rutte and Xavier Bettel. The least digitally engaged leaders in 2019 were Marjan Sarec, Victor Orbán, Boyko Borisov, Giuseppe Conte and Mateusz Morawiecki (Chart 1). The importance of digitization as reflected in the Heads of State and Government's activities thus differs to a large degree throughout Europe.

## Key future technologies are outside the scope of European Heads of State and Government

Topics such as 5G and Artificial Intelligence have dominated public discussions around technology. This focus is also reflected in the combined engagement of European Heads of State and Government with 126 engagements for 5G and 116 engagements in Artificial Intelligence.

However, our analysis also shows that key future technologies such as Quantum Computing (2 engagements), Robotics (12 engagements), Future Mobility (15 engagements) and Cloud Technology (16 engagements) only received little attention. Also, digital education was not addressed widely by top politicians, with only 14 engagements of all 27 European Heads of State and Government combined (Chart 2).

## There is no harmonized approach to digitization throughout Europe

Comparing the digital engagement of top politicians across technologies reveals that no harmonized approach to digitization exists throughout Europe (Charts 3-7). With the exception of Artificial Intelligence, which is a top focus area for four Heads of State and Government (Chart 4), all other technologies are emphasized by one very active top politician, while others are less engaged in the respective area. 5G and Industry 4.0 are focus areas for Angela Merkel (Charts 3 and 6), Entrepreneurship for Mark Rutte (Chart 5) and E-Government for Jüri Ratas. This not only shows the lack of a unified approach to digitization, but also indicates that digital seems to mean different things for different politicians. For Angela Merkel it is largely infrastructure, while for Jüri Ratas it means digitizing government services.

## Europe needs an integrated strategy for digital technologies

„Digitization in Europe is still patchwork", says Professor Philip Meissner of the European Center for Digital Competitiveness by ESCP Business School Berlin. „How well Europe is able to position itself in terms of digital technologies will determine its future economic power and geopolitical position. We finally need an integrated and forceful approach to push this topic throughout Europe. In a nutshell, we need a digital strategy. Such a push should include attention by top leaders in the field of Entrepreneurship and Digital Education", says Meissner. "If the Heads of State and Government focus on a topic, this signals its importance not only to the entire government and administration but the entire country, which will inspire action."

**European Heads of State and Government have clear topic focused profiles**

Different focus areas also become visible when looking at the specific engagement profiles of all 27 European Heads of State and Government. When comparing Europe's top three economies in terms of size; Germany, France and Italy, important differences emerge (Charts 8-10). First, Giuseppe Conte has significantly less engagements related to digitization compared to Angela Merkel and Emmanuel Macron. More importantly, the engagement profiles show which topics the respective leaders spend their time on. Angela Merkel focuses mainly on infrastructure topics, with 5G and Industry 4.0 adding up to 52 % of her digital engagements. Less focus is on Entrepreneurship, with no engagement in 2019, as well as emerging exponential technologies like Robotics or Blockchain – with 2% of her engagements respectively (Chart 8). Emmanuel Macron, on the other hand, focused mostly on disruptive technologies like Artificial Intelligence (24%) and Entrepreneurship (12%), neglecting other technologies like Robotics, Blockchain or Quantum computing as well as Digital Education (no engagement) (Chart 9). Giuseppe Conte shares President Macron's technology focus, with Artificial Intelligence (27%) and Cybersecurity (20%) being the most important focus areas. In contrast, there we no engagements in other important technologies like Blockchain or Quantum computing as well as Digital Education (Chart 10).

**European priorities for digital technologies could push joint implementation**

„Given the scale of the challenge and the speed of technological progress, we need European priorities to finally enable large scale investments in future technologies", says Dr. Christian Poensgen of the European Center for Digital Competitiveness by ESCP Business School Berlin. „Europe needs to act now."

The Digital Engagement Report is published for the first time this year and will be distributed annually from now on. The report was developed by the European Center for Digital Competitivess by ESCP Business School in Berlin. It comprises the results of in depths analyses of all European Heads of State and Government's digital engagements in 2019 summarized in an index. The Digital Engagement Index consists of a variety of publicly accessible information provided by the governments, press, and personal accounts on the social media platform Twitter. The study was conducted by Professor Dr. Philip Meissner, Dr. Christian Poensgen and Dennis Heumann as well as Professor Dr. Klaus Schweinsberg from the European Center for Digital Competitiveness by ESCP Business School in Berlin.

More results as well as detailed engagement profiles for each European Head of State or Government are available here:

www.digital-competitiveness.eu/digitalengagement.

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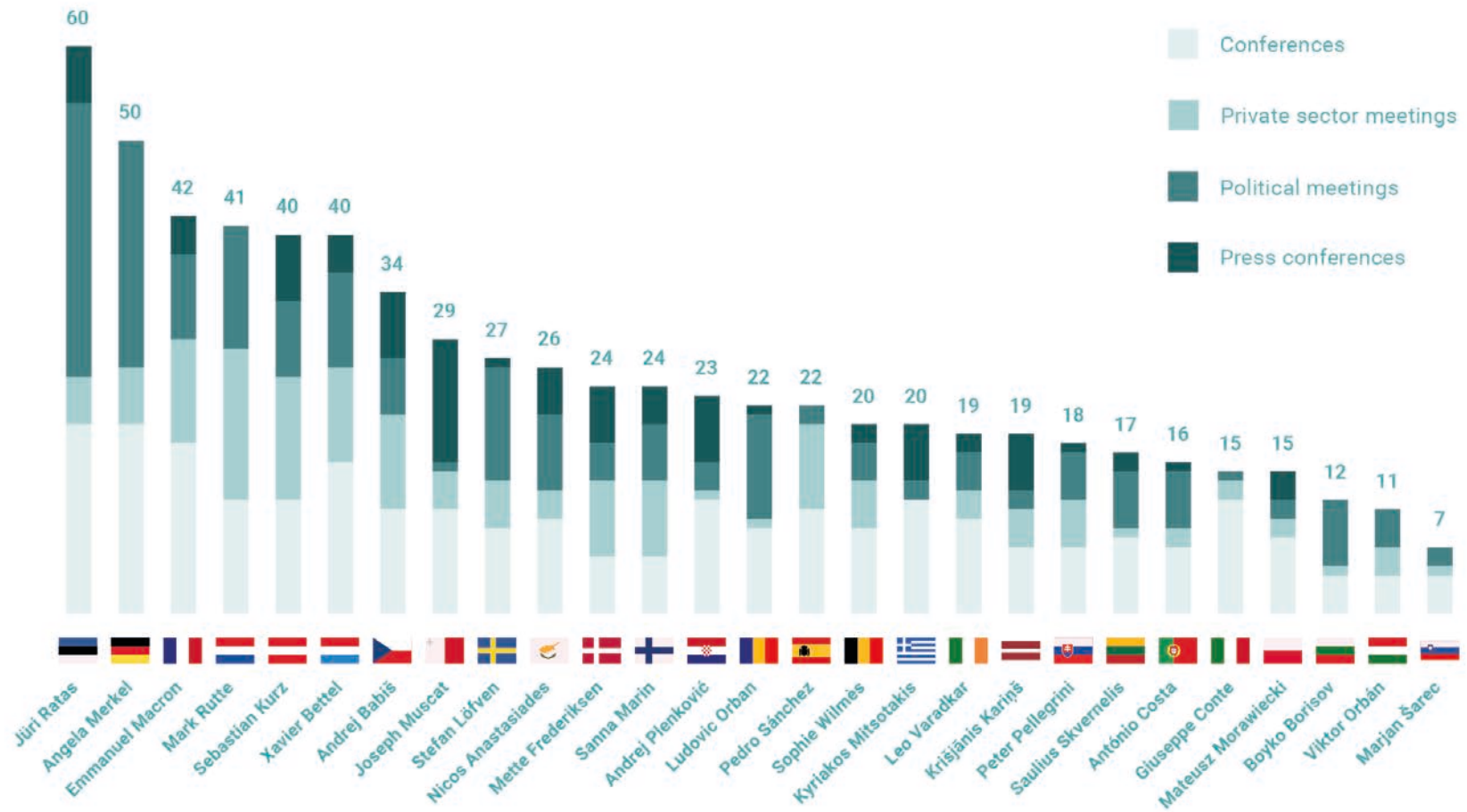030 32007-145

## ESCP Business School

ESCP Business School was founded in 1819. The school has chosen to teach responsible leadership, open to the world and based on European multiculturalism. Our campuses in Berlin, London, Madrid, Paris, Turin and Warsaw are the stepping stones that allow students to experience this European approach to management. Several generations of entrepreneurs and managers were thus trained in the firm belief that the business world may feed society in a positive way. This conviction and our values: excellence, singularity, creativity, and plurality, daily guide our mission and build up our pedagogical vision. Every year, ESCP welcomes 6000 students and 5000 managers from 120 different nationalities. Its strength lies in its many business training programmes, both general and specialized: Bachelor, Master, MBA, Executive MBA, PhD and executive education, all of which include a multi-campus experience.

## European Center for Digital Competitiveness by ESCP Business School

The European Center for Digital Competitiveness was founded at ESCP Business School in Berlin with the goal of bringing digital competitiveness to the political and public debate, where it currently only plays a minor role. Given the digital revolution that our economy and society currently face, digital competitiveness must take center stage in debates to secure our prosperity for the future. Similarly, in this increasingly dynamic environment we want to support the initiative to position Europe as a global leader for the responsible application of technology for the benefit of society.

**Chart 1:**

**Digital Engagement of European Heads of Government**
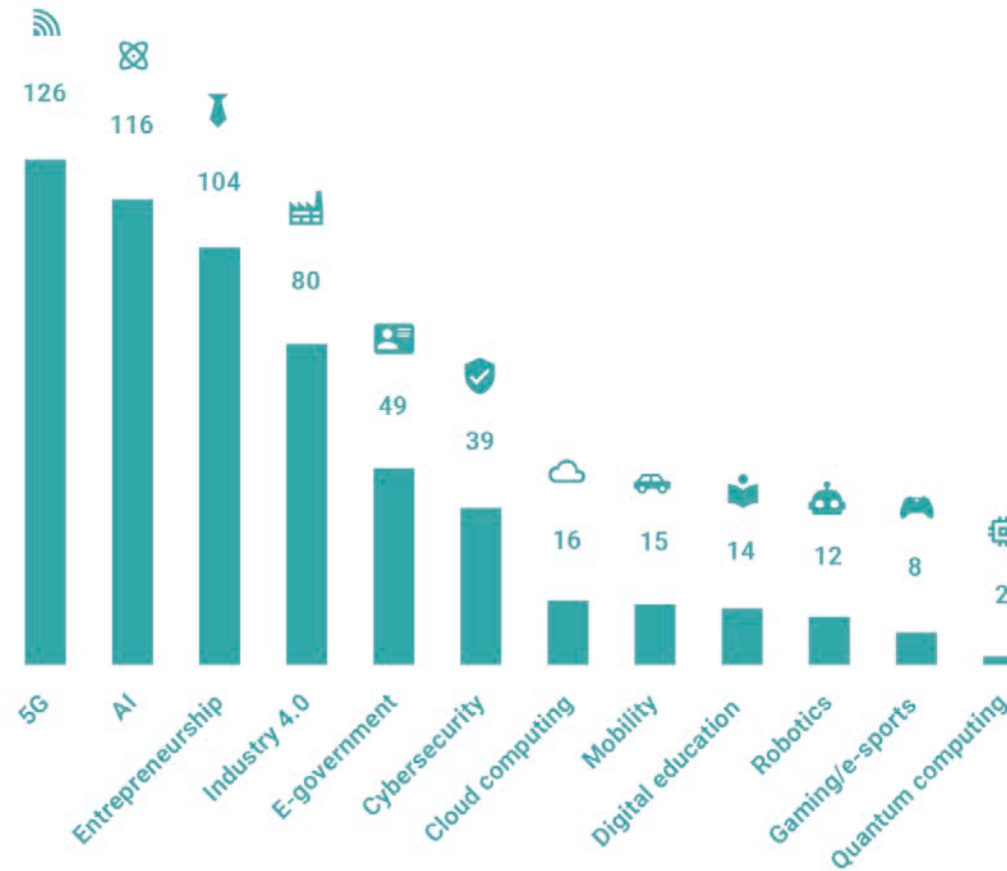
**Chart 2:**

## Digital Engagement by Topic



| Topic | Value |
|-------|-------|
| 5G | 126 |
| AI | 116 |
| Entrepreneurship | 104 |
| Industry 4.0 | 80 |
| E-government | 49 |
| Cybersecurity | 39 |
| Cloud computing | 16 |
| Mobility | 15 |
| Digital education | 14 |
| Robotics | 12 |
| Gaming/e-sports | 8 |
| Quantum computing | 2 |

Chart 3:
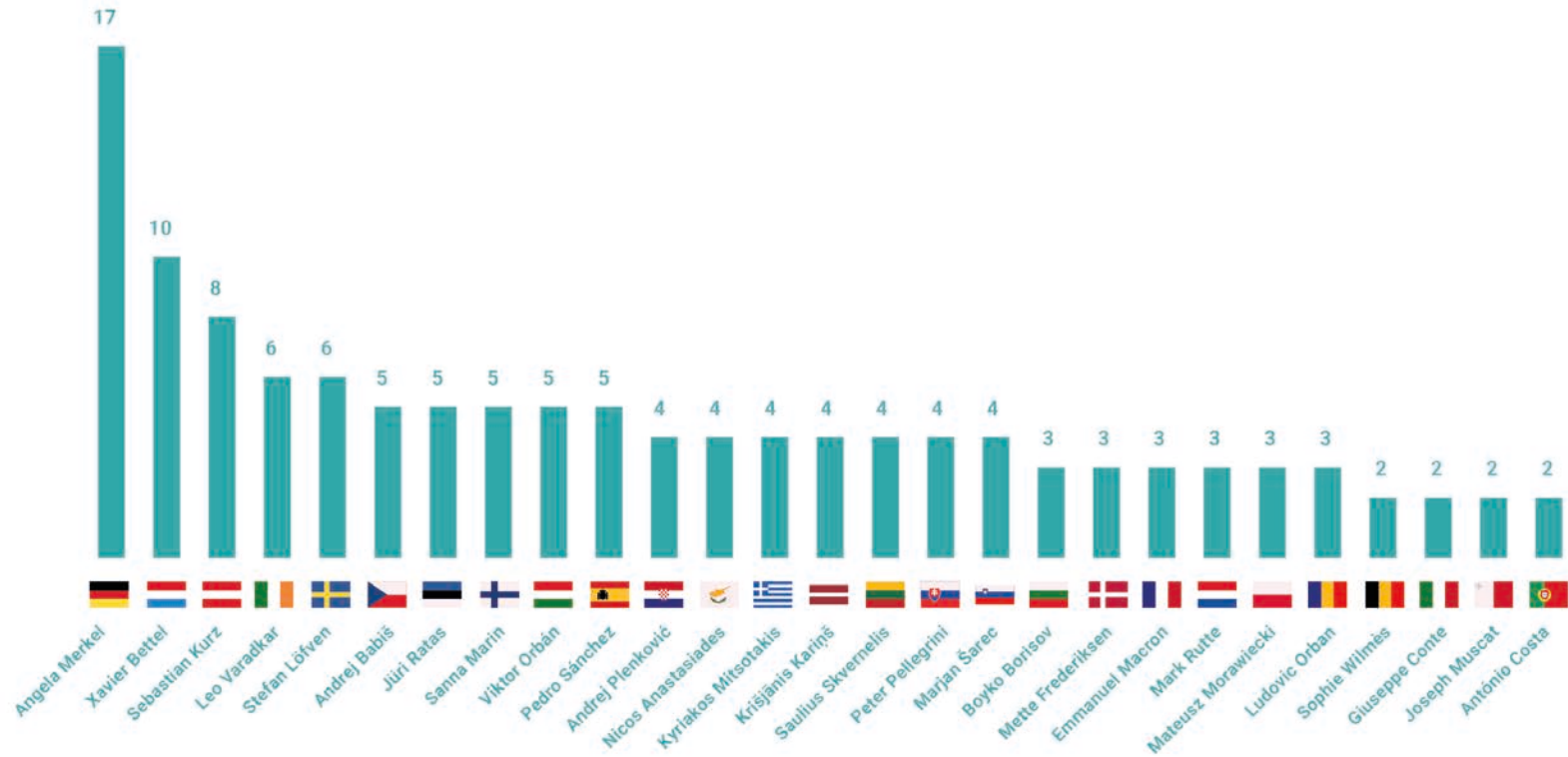
**Engagement in 5G**

**Chart 4:**

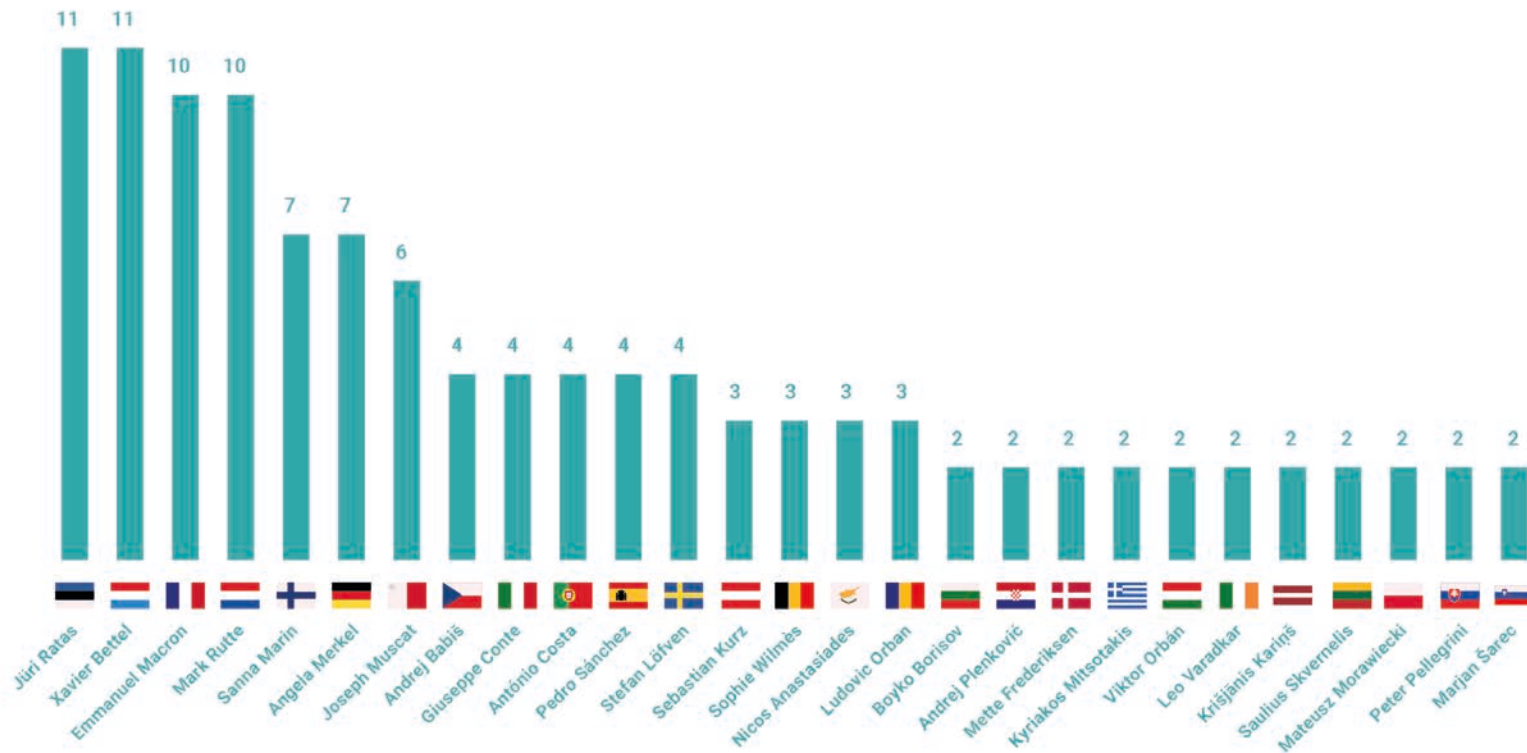## Engagement in Artificial Intelligence

**Chart 5:**
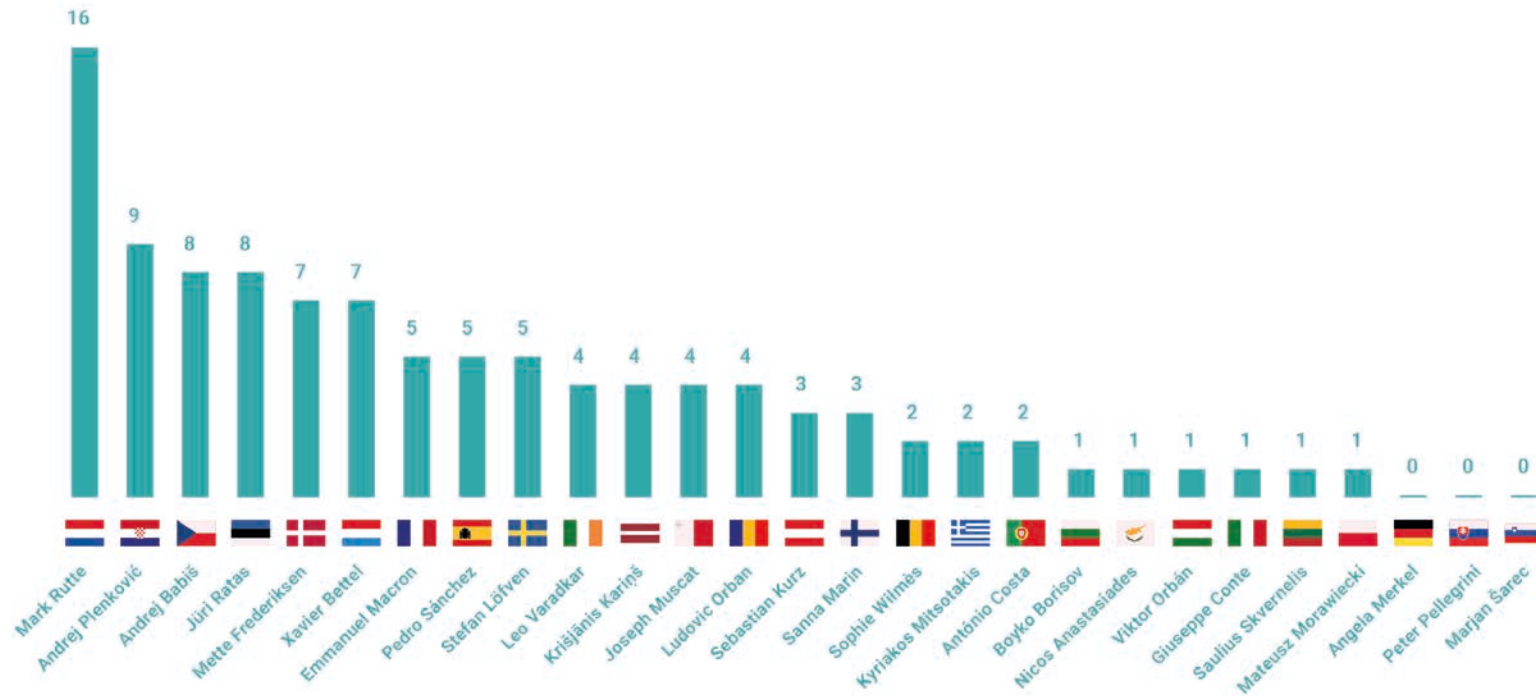
## Engagement in Entrepreneurship

**Chart 6:**

**Engagement in Industry 4.0**
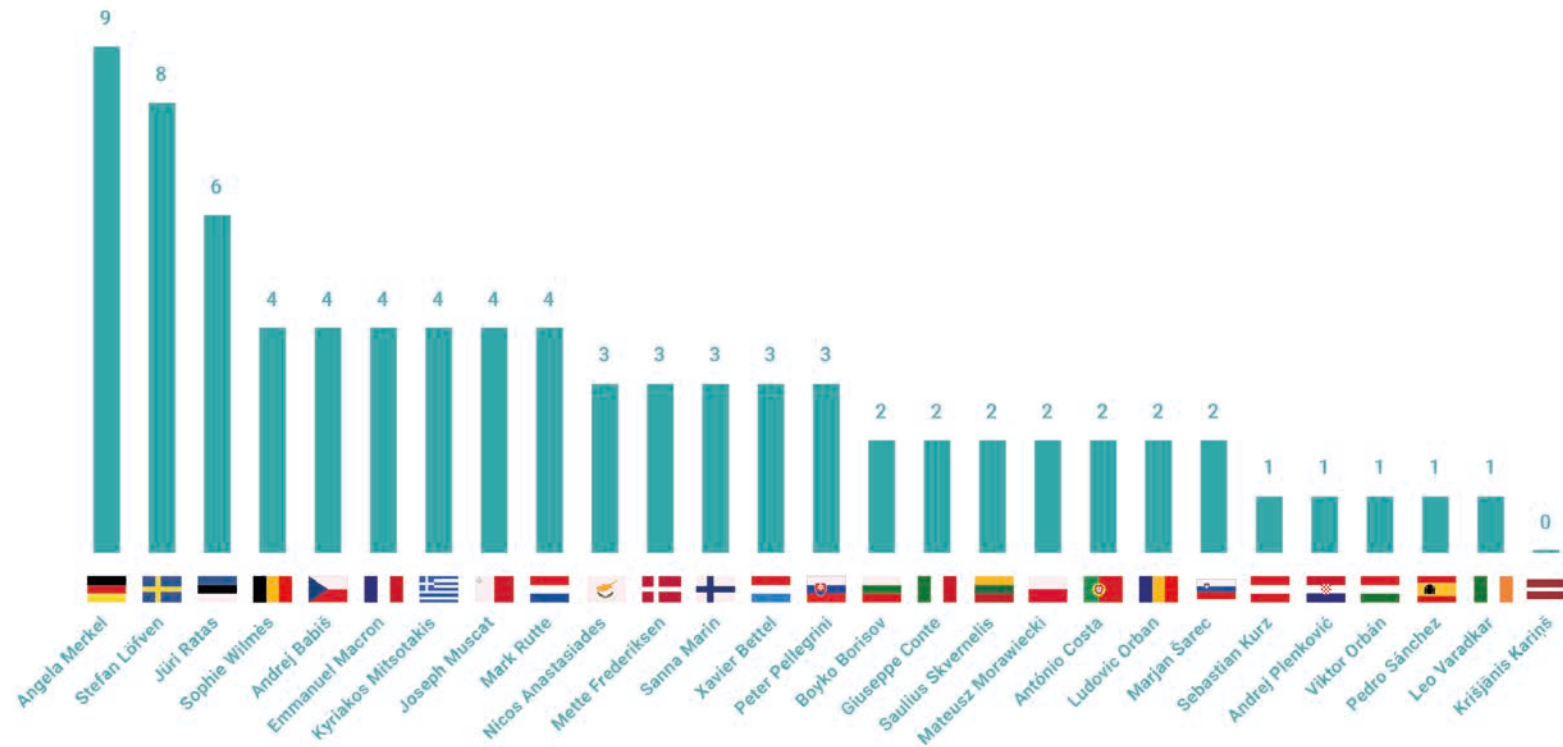
**Chart 7:**

**Engagement in E-Government**
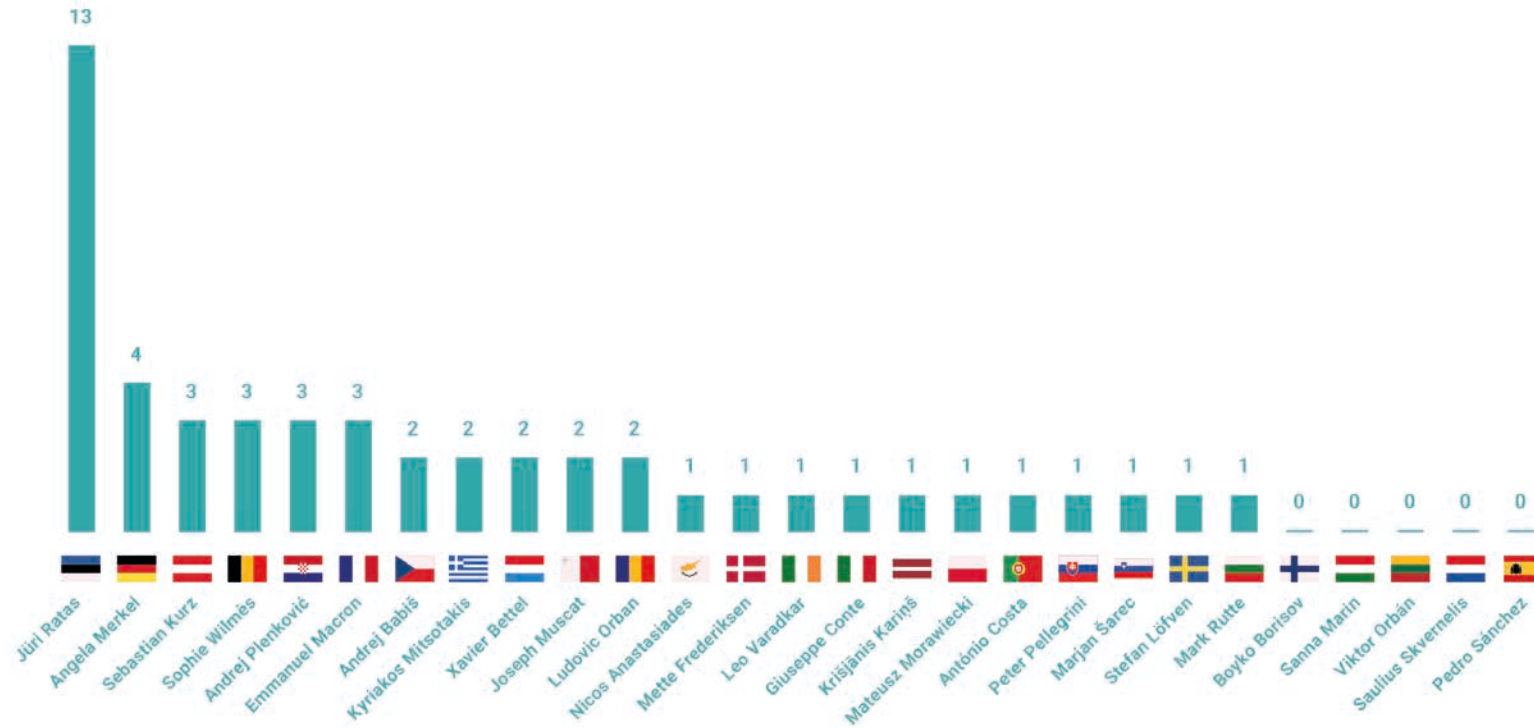
**Chart 8:**

**Digital Engagement Profile:  Angela Merkel, Germany**

| Category | Percentage |
|---|---|
| 5G | 34% |
| Industry 4.0 | 18% |
| AI | 14% |
| Cybersecurity | 10% |
| E-government | 8% |
| Mobility | 8% |
| Digital education | 2% |
| Gaming/e-sports | 2% |
| Robotics | 2% |
| Blockchain | 2% |
| Quantum computing | 2% |
| Entrepreneurship | 0% |
| Cloud computing | 0% |
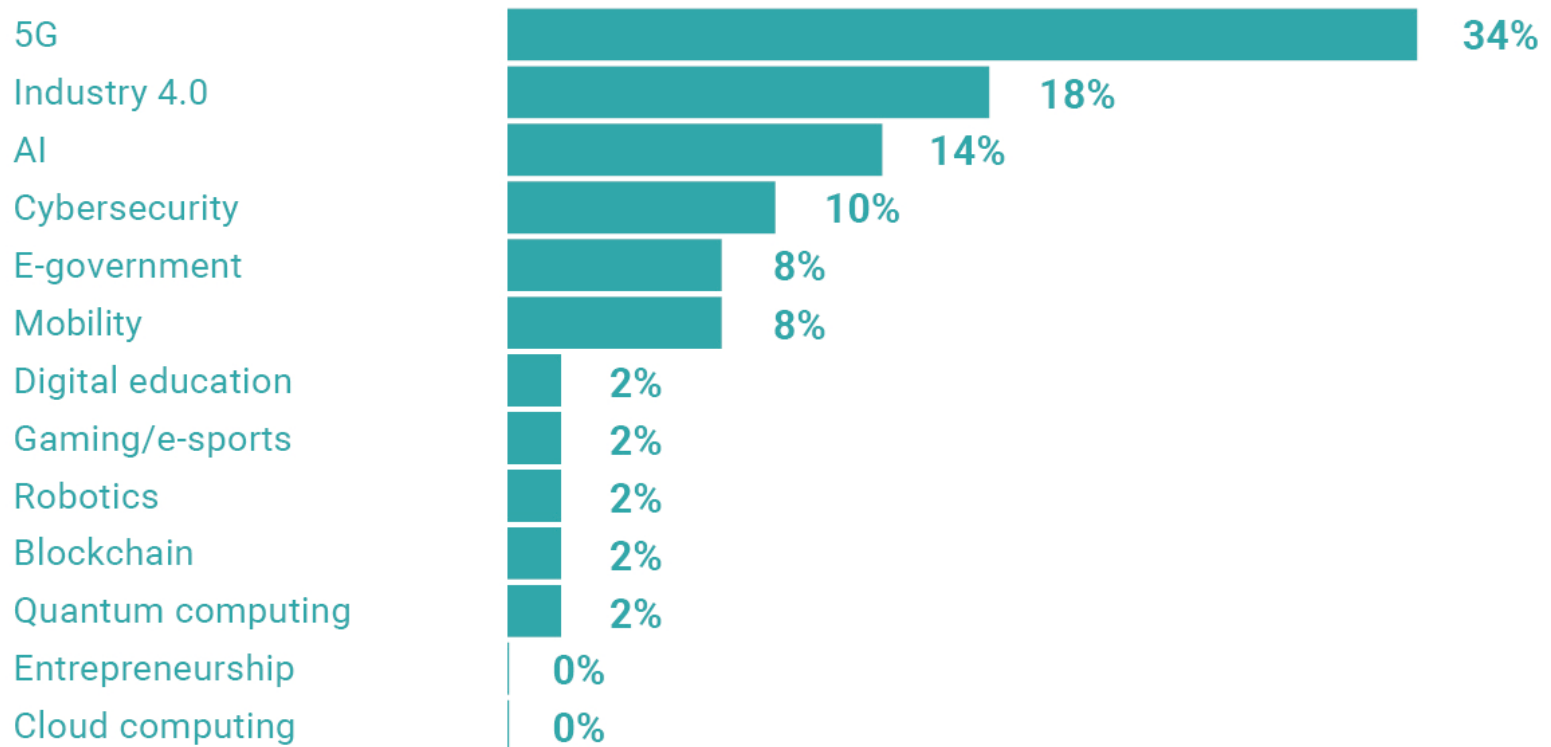
**Chart 9:**

## Digital Engagement Profile: Emmanuel Macron, France



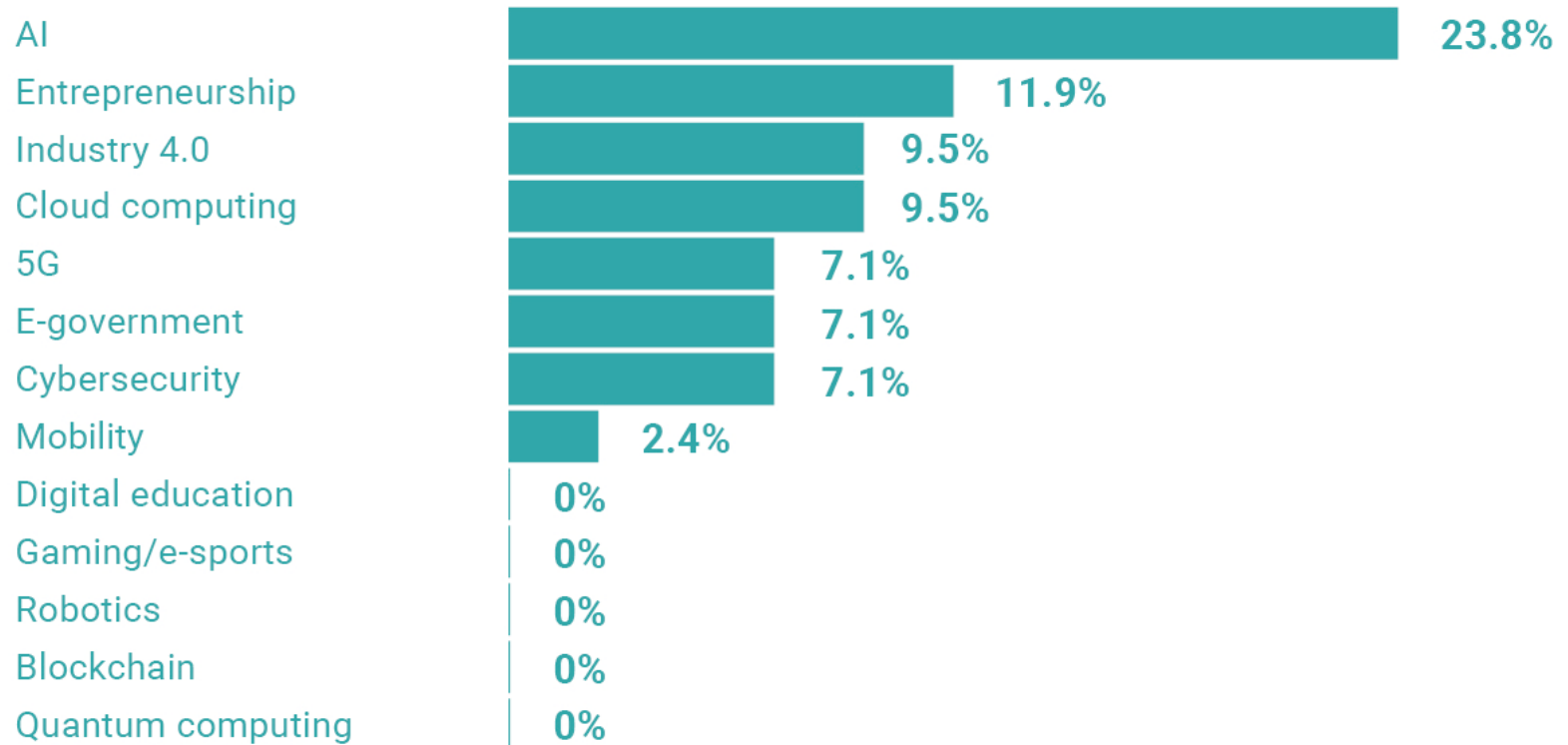| Category | Value |
|---|---|
| AI | 23.8% |
| Entrepreneurship | 11.9% |
| Industry 4.0 | 9.5% |
| Cloud computing | 9.5% |
| 5G | 7.1% |
| E-government | 7.1% |
| Cybersecurity | 7.1% |
| Mobility | 2.4% |
| Digital education | 0% |
| Gaming/e-sports | 0% |
| Robotics | 0% |
| Blockchain | 0% |
| Quantum computing | 0% |

**Chart 10:**

**Digital Engagement Profile: Guiseppe Conte, Italy**

| Category | Percentage |
|---|---|
| AI | 26.7% |
| Cybersecurity | 20% |
| 5G | 13.3% |
| Industry 4.0 | 13.3% |
| Entrepreneurship | 6.7% |
| E-government | 6.7% |
| Robotics | 6.7% |
| Digital education | 0% |
| Mobility | 0% |
| Gaming/e-sports | 0% |
| Blockchain | 0% |
| Quantum computing | 0% |
| Cloud computing | 0% |