In the CDR Initiative, the Federal Ministry of Justice and Consumer Protection (BMJV) works in dialogue with companies to discuss the substance of Corporate Digital Responsibility (CDR) and to determine the areas in which CDR activities are necessary, worthwhile and appropriate while identifying the specific measures that need to be taken. The following explains the CDR Initiative in greater detail:

I. The process of digitalization must be shaped responsibly – CDR can play a central role here

1.) Digitalization is transforming society, the economy and our ways of interacting. But although this transformation is creating a wealth of opportunities, it also presents a number of risks. Digitalization is furthermore challenging the analogue world’s prevailing norms and values while giving rise to a whole range of new questions.

2.) These include issues such as the protection of users in the digital world, the promotion of digital self-determination across all sectors of society, the strengthening of information security and the protection of personal data, the responsible use of artificial intelligence applications in interfaces with employees and customers, the use of digital technologies for achieving the sustainability objectives of the 2030 Agenda, as well as general issues concerning the ethical limits of commercialisation within the digital economy.

3.) Against the backdrop of this process of digital transformation, it is vitally important that the debate about our society’s future development is conducted not only in terms of the technological, commercial, and economic implications, but also in terms of the ethical aspects and the underlying legal framework. The digitalization process must be shaped in a responsible and fair manner so that nobody is left out.

4.) CDR can make a significant contribution in helping to create this fairness and ensure that the process of digital transformation benefits everyone and develops in a sustainable manner.

5.) “CDR” refers to voluntary corporate activities which extend above and beyond the current legal requirements while helping to proactively shape the digital world for the benefit of
society as a whole. By this definition, CDR can be understood as a subset of the broader domain of Corporate Responsibility.

6.) In the digital world in particular, responsibility needs to be regarded as a shared undertaking: from the economic sector and policymakers to consumers and representatives of civil society – everyone has a contribution to make. What we need is a broad-based alliance spanning all sectors of society.

7.) In order for digital transformation to succeed, it is important that the economic sector assumes its own fair share of responsibility, building trust and showing itself to be accountable in a credible manner. Without trust, we firmly believe that digital markets cannot grow in a sustainable manner.

8.) Efforts to shape the digitalization process in a responsible manner should aim to harness the opportunities provided by digital technologies and promote values such as fairness, inclusion, trust, autonomy, transparency and sustainability.

9.) Shaping the process of digital transformation in this value-oriented fashion will have a positive impact on Europe’s image within the global economy and provide all the companies operating in Europe with an incentive to make the principles of digital responsibility part of their business activities.

II. Objectives of the CDR Initiative

The CDR Initiative has the following objectives:

- To foster – among policymakers, the economic sector and society in general – a common understanding about the principle of taking responsibility for the digital world.
- To enable knowledge-sharing on CDR best practices and problem-solving strategies.
- To tackle salient challenges and develop problem-solving strategies in the context of scenarios.
- To raise awareness about the issue and help coordinate the various national, European and international activities in the field.

Using possible scenarios of a digital future, the initiative will develop problem-solving strategies and make the results available to other interested companies.
This will be linked to an invitation for companies to analyse their own activities using the created methodology, thereby discovering what Corporate (Digital) Responsibility can mean for their own organisation.

**III. Working principles**

The working group will discuss ethical questions raised by the companies with regard to digital innovation and for which no generally applicable answers have yet been found. In order to develop potential CDR strategies and propose answers for public discourse, the group has decided to take an undogmatic approach. Given the expandable nature of the group, its main working principles are the values essential for any CDR initiative: transparency, trust and a willingness to learn from one another.

**IV. Who we are**

For the initial phase, the Initiative is being run by the BMJV in conjunction with a number of different companies. But the group will gradually be expanded to include more companies as well as representatives from civil society, associations and academia along with influencers and investors. Users and consumers will also have a say, thereby ensuring that their expectations will likewise be addressed during the discussions in the CDR Initiative.

Digitalization has been part of Deutsche Telekom’s corporate strategy for many years, with the company regarding itself as a key player in shaping the process. Our intention is to be more than just a company that provides infrastructure to society. We see ourselves as a trustworthy partner for every aspect of life – in private and professional spheres, at all times and in all places. Our mission is to simplify people’s lives in a sustainable way. Taking a responsible approach to digitalization and addressing the consequences of the digital world are thus central aspects of our activity and our company-wide sustainability strategy. In order to coordinate the various elements, Deutsche Telekom launched its “Digital Responsibility” initiative more than 2 years ago. This shines the spotlight on different aspects and offers a platform for dialogue on the latest questions, opportunities and risks. The topics range from data protection and information security issues through to ethical questions concerning AI and other technological developments, while also covering education and media competence as well as the aspect of sustainability (climate/environmental protection in particular). The measures we implement are described in detail in our annual CR Report.

CDR examples:

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2 https://www.cr-bericht.telekom.com/site18/
• In order to use Deutsche Telekom’s products, customers have to provide data. They can view and manage their personal data in the Data Cockpit. Right from the product development stage, the company applies the “privacy by design” principle and its own guidelines on the ethical use of AI, Big Data and the IoT.
• Within the Cyber Security Sharing Alliance³ founded by Deutsche Telekom, more than 1000 companies exchange real-time information about cyber attacks, thereby engaging in active prevention. Alongside the companies, state institutions are also involved via so-called Computer Emergency Response Teams (CERTs).
• With a project entitled Medien.Abersicher⁴ (“Media: But Safe”), Deutsche Telekom promotes digital media competence across the entire age spectrum. The topics range from data protection to digital estate. The offering is complemented by print media, workshops and a YouTube channel. Consumers and SMEs are the focus of the cooperation with the organisation Deutschland sicher im Netz⁵ (“A safe online Germany”).

As a media company, DIE ZEIT has special responsibility. Its greatest asset is the trust of its readers and users. This is why the editorial teams have set themselves editorial guidelines defining the fundamental values that apply to their reporting on all different channels. An additional Code of Ethics sets down further rules of conduct for the journalist’s everyday activities.

CDR examples:
• The editorial teams of DIE ZEIT bring transparency to their editorial decisions and processes via the company’s own weblogs Glashaus and Fragen der ZEIT. In their blog articles, they explain how critical issues are handled while being open about any mistakes made. There are also frequent discussions about questions of digital responsibility which arise in connection with new formats and projects.
• The “My Country Talks” project initiated by DIE ZEIT in conjunction with numerous other media organisations worldwide brings together people with different political opinions. Since the participants reveal sensitive information such as their political outlook, data protection vis-à-vis third parties is a fundamental part of the project’s information architecture.
• In their handling of user data, the editorial teams have set themselves strict rules. They do not share user data with third parties and they will only analyse the data

³ https://www.cssa.de
⁴ https://www.medienabersicher.de
⁵ https://www.sicher-im-netz.de
themselves under extremely limited conditions – in aggregate and anonymous form – and only if this was made transparently clear to the user beforehand.

In its sustainability strategy, Miele has formulated a clear vision: it wants to be the most sustainable company in the industry. In striving to fulfil this vision, it is not content to simply rest on its laurels – it is committed to keep making new progress. Miele was quick to recognise the importance of Corporate Digital Responsibility (CDR) and make it one of the core objectives of its sustainability strategy. This is because the generations of consumers who have placed their trust in Miele need to be sure that Miele also puts the utmost care into developing digital products and services.

CDR examples:
- Privacy by design: appliances are shipped out with default settings that ensure the highest degree of data minimisation. Any communication or data transfer that goes beyond this must be explicitly activated by the customer.
- KogniHome: together with stakeholders from academia and society in general, Miele examines how digital products and services are used in practice so that the appliances can be made as easy, convenient and safe as possible for people to use – including for senior citizens and people with disabilities. The goal is for new products to assist and liberate customers and to consciously avoid exposing them to unnecessary or unwanted restrictions.
- Sustainable support: Miele pledges to support the networked components and services for as long as technically possible and economically viable. This serves to increase product lifespan in the digital sphere.

Since October 2017, the Otto Group has been actively addressing the complex topic of responsible corporate development and management in the digital era. In an internal process, the Otto Group crystallised its own understanding of Corporate Digital Responsibility and identified the relevant focus areas. For the Otto Group, CDR is the next logical step in its commitment to corporate responsibility. It takes the view that CDR is most effective when conducted in dialogue with other stakeholders in society. Six focus areas were identified. These are “Data and Algorithms”, “Future of Work”, “Digital Education”, “Smart Living”, “Balancing Powers” and “Next Supply Chain”.

CDR examples:
- The Otto Group is planning to invite various stakeholders from across society (politics, academia, business and activism) to a dialogue event in Q3/Q4 2019 where the CDR
focus areas will be discussed from a future-oriented perspective. The aim is to create a platform that identifies possible routes towards a positively sustainable digital future.

- The **Otto Group**'s “Digital Readiness” programme is directed at the entire executive level (directors and managing directors) with the goal of ensuring that top management all share a uniform understanding of the potential inherent within digitalization, enabling them to identify opportunities and drive future development.

- Across the organisation, the **Otto Group** is planning to introduce a Code of Ethics that will concentrate on the processing of customer data (focus area: Data & Algorithms).

**SAP**’s focus on the principle of sustainability and social responsibility is based on its corporate vision of helping the world run better and improving people’s lives. The efforts are aimed at tackling the world’s biggest economic, ecological and social challenges and at helping the company to create a sustainable future for itself, its customers and society as a whole in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for 2030. **SAP** takes the view that it derives valuable insight from its own commitment, making sustainability easier for its customers to attain too. One precondition here is responsible entrepreneurship that meets high ethical standards. **SAP** is actively involved in continuing to develop these standards for the particular context of the technology sector. The company’s Corporate Digital Responsibility (CDR) is thus a logical consequence of its involvement in the area of sustainability.

**CDR examples:**

- **SAP** was the first European technology company to draft its own guidelines for artificial intelligence (AI). It has also set up an external advisory board for the ethical use of artificial intelligence. Consisting of experts from academia, politics and business, the board ensures that the guidelines are properly implemented.

- **SAP** is committed to helping avoid the “misuse” of software: in keeping with the National Action Plan on Human Rights, **SAP** is looking at ways to prevent human rights from being violated by the use of software. **SAP** bases its approach here on the ten universal principles outlined in the UN Global Compact.

- **SAP Next Gen** is an initiative connecting universities, educational institutions, start-ups and other partners, enabling them to work together on digital innovations which support the UN’s sustainable development goals. The goal of the **SAP Next Gen** Chapters is to convey practical digital knowledge to university graduates as the managers and specialists of the future.
**Telefónica** regards itself as a pioneer in shaping the digital world and, as a telecommunications provider, it operates at the very heart of the digital transformation process. The goal is to shape the digital world in responsible ways that benefit employees, customers and owners alike. One major focus is on the vast potential of the digital era, while another is on the challenges and risks faced by people and the environment. Corporate Digital Responsibility already represents an important part of **Telefónica Deutschland**’s business activities. The company has initiated measures across the entire organisation and – under the heading off “Strengthening life in the digital world” in its “Responsible Business Plan” – has formulated clear goals and ambitions for the years leading up to 2020. These cover the following three focus areas: 1) data protection and information security; 2) digital inclusion; 3) sustainable innovations.

**CDR examples:**

- **Telefónica** gets people from all ages groups into good shape for the digital world with its nationwide programmes “Think Big”, “Digital mobility in old age – Tablets for senior citizens” and the “O₂ Gurus” as well as further initiatives aimed at the protection of children and young people.

- Thanks to their extensive range of services, **Telefónica**’s O₂ Gurus make an important contribution by encouraging people to take advantage of the benefits offered by the digital world. With their slogan “Help, advise, inspire”, they can be contacted online, by phone or via chat and videochat. They are also available in person in the O₂ Shops.

- **Telefónica** already plays an active role in the public discourse about the future of the digital world and the social/ethical aspects of digitalization. Having first opened in 2011, **Telefónica BASECAMP** is now firmly established as a digital hotspot and centre for discussion in Berlin.

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6 [www.telefonica.de/responsibility](http://www.telefonica.de/responsibility)
8 [https://basecamp.telefonica.de/](https://basecamp.telefonica.de/)