



## **OPENING CEREMONY 5<sup>th</sup>** **ENISA E-HEALTH SECURITY** **CONFERENCE**

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Good morning.

It is a great pleasure for me to speak at this opening ceremony. Catalonia is the land where I grew up. Therefore, it makes me very happy to see the city of Barcelona, my home town, hosting international events such as this eHealth Security Conference.



This is the fifth edition of the Conference and the first time it has been held in our country. So, first of all, on behalf of the Government of Spain, I would like to say welcome. Welcome to Barcelona, and welcome to Spain.

Spain is not the country it used to be just 40 years ago. Today, Spain is a constitutional democracy, which upholds the rule of law and is a country of freedom. We are an advanced, open-minded and diverse country. The composition of our Government, in which more than 50% of the ministers are women, reflects this reality. Our health system is a worldwide benchmark, and our life expectancy is one of the highest in the world.

In the technology landscape, too, many aspects have advanced. We now have one of the most advanced broadband networks of all the OECD countries and we are ready to lead the next 5G revolution. We are proud to be a country of innovators, and I am convinced that public-sector innovation will lead us to become the next Startup Nation by 2030.

But today, we are here to talk about cybersecurity, and how cybersecurity applies to the future of healthcare.

Let me continue by referring to security risks. Unfortunately, this is an inherent characteristic of technological development. Attacks are sophisticated, cybercriminals are becoming better organised and users are accessing their personal and professional information from more and more devices. In short, the scenario is getting increasingly complex. But at the same time, we need cybersecurity. Because without it there can be no economic growth, prosperity or welfare in the digital age.

Resigning ourselves to fate is not an option. We can and must overcome these risks. With your talent and knowledge, with the use of cutting-edge instruments and with

more training and awareness. In the political field, too, we will address these risks, giving cybersecurity the importance it deserves. Only that way we can ensure our actions are coordinated enough.

During last year, the NIS Directive has been transposed into the Spanish legal system. This directive will significantly improve cooperation between institutions, both within Spain and throughout Europe. I am sure that during today's proceedings we will hear much about the need for greater international collaboration. The transposition of the European directive is an important initial step for Spain in this direction.

Another political action taken by the Spanish government to protect online users is the approval, on April 30th this year, of a new National Cybersecurity Strategy. This new strategy is the first policy recognition in Spain that cybersecurity transcends the technological field, as a pervasive element that affects economy and society as a whole. Thus, cybersecurity is not only a technical issue but above all, a strategic one. Consequently, all economic and social agents need to address this question.

As an example of what is being done in this context, the Government is currently working to create a National Cybersecurity Forum, with the participation of the private sector, including tech companies, of course, but also with contributions from civil society, the academia, non-profit organisations and independent experts.

Furthermore, a global challenge such as cybersecurity cannot be confronted by local means alone. We need a response at the European level.

At this very moment, the EU countries are all engaged in defining a new framework of cybersecurity for European telecommunications networks. The moment for this could not be more timely, with the proliferation of 5G networks and the definitive take off of the Internet of Things coming into plain sight.

If all goes according to schedule, before the end of this year, the European Union will provide each Member State with a toolbox. A toolbox comprising a set of measures to strengthen the security of telecommunications networks and infrastructure.

As I mentioned previously, cybersecurity is a question with pervasive impact, affecting all areas of life, including health. Let me say a few words in this particular respect:

Technological progress is accelerating an evolution in the healthcare field, from a reactive, mass-care outlook, to one based on preventive, personalised attention, in an approach that will be more effective and also more sustainable. For a country like Spain, with a Welfare State that provides universal health coverage, sustainability of the health system is a matter of State.

But we believe that Government's involvement does not end there. The State must ensure people's well-being, fostering prosperity, fairness and social justice. It is our responsibility to govern effectively, in order to prevent this technological revolution from generating new inequalities and situations of injustice. Digitalisation must be governed so that we may overcome the digital divide and ensure that everyone has access to the future opportunities that digitalisation will bring. In other words, our mission is to build a state of digital wellbeing.

In accordance with these principles, governments cannot ignore the risks that digitalisation poses to our well-being, such as possible breaches of the confidentiality of medical data. In Europe, we have one of the world's most advanced legal frameworks for data protection. In Spain, moreover, the protection of personal data is ultimately guaranteed by the Constitution.

In the healthcare field, personal data protection must be guaranteed without prejudice to the interoperability and compatibility of information systems. Overcoming this technological challenge will help us save lives. Therefore, as Government (via the public company *Red.es*, which forms part of the Secretariat of State that I represent) we are working to achieve the interoperability of patients' digital clinical histories between the national and regional health systems.

Another very important challenge that arises with digitalisation is that of online misinformation. Its victims are usually vulnerable people, in situations of loneliness or desperation. For this reason, the problem is especially acute and terrible abuses can occur. The State must assume its responsibility towards society, disclosing scientific information in an understandable way, preventing deceptive advertising and professional intrusion. However, the Internet can also provide a channel for supplying trustworthy recommendations on lifestyles, diet, hygiene, and, for example, the importance of fulfilling a recommended programme of medical treatment.

The digital revolution has barely started. The changes yet to come will bring new hopes. However, these hopes will only be fulfilled if we can overcome the intrinsic risks of digitalisation. It is up to us all – not only governments but everyone here, too – to shape the world of tomorrow.

As I said at the outset, to fight cybercrime we need talent, advanced instruments, training and awareness, and effective political action. Meetings such as this one will help in all these areas, by informing professionals about the latest technical and regulatory advances, and by sharing best practices so that we may continue to progress. As a result, events like this will also save lives.

I would like to thank ENISA for making this occasion possible and for inviting Barcelona and Spain to host this fifth edition. I also want to thank all those attending this Conference, for joining us and for your work in making healthcare safer. I hope you find today's activities enjoyable and useful and, above all, that you join us in working to create a better world by enhancing our cybersecurity. Each of you, in your cities and countries of origin, can help build a real state of digital wellbeing. You can help build a better world.

Thank you very much. And once again, welcome to Barcelona. Welcome to Spain.