



Take the power of AI on the go with the free Copilot app Create images, get help with writing, and search faster

No, thanks

[Get the Copilot app](#)



Microsoft AI

Cloud

Consumer

Education

Industry

Social Impact

Startups

Microsoft announces plans for first datacenter region in Greece as part of "GR for GRowth" digital transformation initiative

05/10/2020

Related Posts

Women behind Minecraft are building a better world through the power of play, block by block >



AI 'for all': How access to new models is advancing academic research, from astronomy to education >

Discoveries in weeks, not years: How AI and high-performance computing are speeding up scientific discovery >

Microsoft will accelerate digitization of the public sector and businesses with access to local cloud services and skill a minimum of 100,000 people in Greece in digital technologies

ATHENS, Greece – October 5, 2020 – Microsoft Corp. announced today its "GR for GRowth" initiative, a significant technology commitment to support the people, government and businesses of all sizes in Greece with technology and resources to create new opportunities for growth. As part of the plan, Microsoft announced its intent to build new datacenters that will establish a Microsoft Cloud region in the country, adding Greece to the world's largest cloud infrastructure footprint and delivering access to low-latency, enterprise-grade cloud services. To support citizens in both professional and personal ambitions, Microsoft also announced its plan to skill approximately 100,000 people in Greece in digital technologies by 2025.

Microsoft President Brad Smith made the announcement at the New Acropolis Museum alongside Kyriakos Mitsotakis, Greece Prime Minister, and Theodosis Michalopoulos, General Manager of Microsoft Greece, Cyprus and Malta.

"Today's commitment to the people and businesses of Greece will position the country among the digital leaders of Europe. A Microsoft datacenter region provides a competitive advantage to our digital economy. At the same time, it is a long-term investment and a vote of confidence in our country's potential. The cloud is transforming every industry and sector. The investment in skilling 100,000 citizens will empower today and tomorrow's Greek workforce," said Prime Minister of Greece, Kyriakos Mitsotakis.

"By a substantial margin, this is the largest investment Microsoft has made in Greece in the 28 years we have been operating here. In part, this reflects confidence that our world-leading datacenter technology can help enable innovation and growth across Greece's economy. In addition, this large investment reflects our optimism about Greece's future, its forward-leaning government, and the country's ongoing economic recovery," said Brad Smith, President, Microsoft.

Carbon management technologies set to soar in Europe, with proactive policies key in unlocking its potential >

With a systems approach to chips, Microsoft aims to tailor everything 'from silicon to service' to meet AI demand >

"Microsoft has a rich 28-year history in Greece with a growing ecosystem of 3,000 partners and customers, including startups, enterprises and NGOs. Today, with plans for Microsoft's first datacenter region in the country and the holistic 'GR for GRowth' plan, we are building on this work, leveling up our contribution to the country's economy. Our commitment is to be a technology ally in driving growth, now and for the generations to come for our country," said Theodosios Michalopoulos, General Manager of Microsoft Greece Cyprus and Malta.

"GR for GRowth"



Delivering the Microsoft Cloud in Greece

Today's announcement will pave the way for local companies, startups and institutions to fully utilize the potential of cloud computing, while maintaining the highest cybersecurity, data residency and compliance standards.

The Greece datacenter region will join Microsoft's global footprint of cloud regions, now totaling **63** regions announced, with Microsoft Azure available in over **140** countries, and will provide companies local access to Microsoft's full set of cloud services, all built on a foundation of trust:

- **Microsoft Azure:** An ever-expanding set of cloud services that offers computing, networking, databases, analytics, AI and IoT services.
- **Microsoft 365:** The world's productivity cloud that delivers best-of-breed productivity apps integrated through cloud services and delivered as part of an open platform for business processes.

- **Dynamics 365 and Power Platform:** The next generation of intelligent business applications that enable organizations to grow, evolve and transform to meet the needs of customers and capture new opportunities.
- **Compliance, security and privacy:** Microsoft offers more than 90 certifications and spends \$1 billion every year on cybersecurity to address security at every layer of the cloud. Microsoft's Greece datacenter region will help companies comply with the [European Union's General Data Protection Regulation](https://blogs.microsoft.com/on-the-issues/2018/05/21/microsofts-commitment-to-gdpr-privacy-and-putting-customers-in-control-of-their-own-data/) (<https://blogs.microsoft.com/on-the-issues/2018/05/21/microsofts-commitment-to-gdpr-privacy-and-putting-customers-in-control-of-their-own-data/>) (GDPR), and will also help customers store data at rest in Greece.
- **Sustainably operated:** As part of Microsoft's global commitment to be carbon negative by 2030, the company will shift to 100 percent supply of renewable energy for its datacenters by 2025.

Accelerating digital transformation and innovation

Leading companies of Greece are already using Microsoft's cloud to ensure their seamless operation, optimize their processes and increase customer satisfaction through advanced collaboration and cloud development services. Today, we are proud to announce that [Alpha Bank](https://www.alpha.gr/en/group/) (<https://www.alpha.gr/en/group/>), [Eurobank](https://www.eurobank.gr/en/group/) (<https://www.eurobank.gr/en/group/>), [National Bank of Greece](https://www.nbg.gr/en/) (<https://www.nbg.gr/en/>), [OTE](https://www.cosmote.gr/cs/otegroup/en/omilos_ote.html) (https://www.cosmote.gr/cs/otegroup/en/omilos_ote.html), [Piraeus Bank](https://www.piraeusbankgroup.com/en/) (<https://www.piraeusbankgroup.com/en/>), [Public Power Corporation](https://www.dei.gr/en/i-dei/i-etairia) (<https://www.dei.gr/en/i-dei/i-etairia>) (DEI) have all expressed their intent to use the Microsoft Cloud services when available from the new region in Greece.

In addition, Microsoft's cloud services will play a key role in creating new ways to digitally preserve, celebrate and experience the culture of Greece. As part of Microsoft's AI for Cultural Heritage program, the company is collaborating with the Ministry of Culture and Sports to bring the Ancient City of Olympia to life using artificial intelligence and other technologies. The immersive, 3D presentation of the monuments and artifacts will give people around the world the opportunity to experience them as they were nearly 3,000 years ago. The project has been approved by the Archaeological Council (KAS) and will be available in 2021.

Skilling Greece's workforce of tomorrow

The final pillar of today's announcement is Microsoft's plan to expand employment opportunities for local professionals and youth over the next five years. Microsoft aims to boost the digital competencies of an estimated 100,000 public sector, business and IT professionals, educators, and students to support the digital transformation of public and private organizations. This ambitious goal will be achieved over the next five years, through a three-pronged skilling program that includes online and physical courses and workshops:

- The broad and dedicated upskilling of Microsoft's customer and partner ecosystems.
- The launch of a new skilling initiative in collaboration with the government especially designed for the civil servants covering the public-sector needs of modernization and digitization.
- Expansion and further investment in the existing programs with [ReGeneration \(https://regeneration.gr/en/\)](https://regeneration.gr/en/) focusing on youth, unemployed and underserved communities, leveraging LinkedIn Learning, MS Learn and GitHub training programs.

Microsoft's "GR for GRowth" initiative is a significant step for Greece, with technology as a catalyst for growth, providing people and businesses the tools and expertise to thrive and innovate in the digital era.