

EU eGovernment action plan 2016-2020

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PURPOSE: to present an EU eGovernment action plan 2016-2020 entitled ‘Accelerating the digital transformation of government’.

BACKGROUND: eGovernment supports administrative processes, improves the quality of the services and increases internal public sector efficiency. Digital public services reduce administrative burden on businesses and citizens by making their interactions with public administrations **faster and efficient, more convenient and transparent, and less costly**. In addition, using digital technologies as an integrated part of governments’ modernisation strategies can unlock further economic and social benefits for society as a whole.

The digital transformation of government is a key element to the success of the single market.

Previous eGovernment action plans (i2010 eGovernment action plan 2006-2010, and eGovernment action plan 2011-2015) encouraged the modernisation of public administrations and led to joint actions on eGovernment.

The last eGovernment action plan 2011-2015 contributed to the coherence of national eGovernment strategies as well as to the exchange of best practices and the interoperability of solutions between Member States. It led, in particular, to the development of technological enablers that are key to facilitate access to and use of public services. However, citizens and businesses are not yet getting the full benefit from digital services that should be available seamlessly across the EU.

Current situation: the current EU eGovernment action plan– based on a **shared long-term vision** - sets out a number of principles that forthcoming initiatives should observe in order to deliver the significant benefits that eGovernment can bring to businesses, citizens and public administrations themselves. It provides for a dynamic and flexible approach, to keep track of the fast changing environment. It will serve as a catalyst to coordinate public sector modernisation efforts and resources in the field of eGovernment.

CONTENT: the underlying vision of the action plan is that by 2020, public administrations and public institutions in the European Union should be open, efficient and inclusive, providing **borderless, personalised, user-friendly, end-to-end digital public services** to all citizens and businesses in the EU.

Several ideas are envisaged.

1) Principles applicable:

- **digital by default:** public administrations should deliver services digitally (including machine readable information) as the preferred option;
- **once only principle:** public administrations should ensure that citizens and businesses supply the same information only once to a public administration;
- **inclusiveness and accessibility:** public administrations should design digital public services that are inclusive by default and cater for different needs such as those of the elderly and people with disabilities;
- **openness and transparency:** they should share information and data between themselves and enable citizens and businesses to access control and correct their own data;
- **cross-border by default:** they should make relevant digital public services available across borders and prevent further fragmentation;
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- **interoperability by default:** public services should be designed to work seamlessly across the single market and across organisational silos ;
- **trustworthiness and security:** all initiatives should go beyond the mere compliance with the legal framework on personal data protection and privacy.

2) Priorities for action: the action plan sets out concrete actions to accelerate the implementation of existing legislation and the related take up of online public services. The main actions are as follows:

- modernise public administration using ICT, and using key digital enablers, particularly in the framework of public procurement;
- strengthen interoperability and the European Interoperability Framework and ensure that EU public administrations adopt it;
- gradually introduce the 'digital by default' and 'once-only' principles, and eInvoicing and eProcurement;
- enable cross-border mobility with interoperable digital public services (the Commission proposes the creation of a Single Digital Gateway, based on existing portals, contact points and networks, expanding, improving and streamlining all information, assistance and problem solving services needed to operate efficiently across borders - for 2016, this will include the go-live of tools for direct communications between citizens and courts in other Member States (e-CODEX), as well as the introduction of the European Case Law Identifier search engine;
- propose legislation to extend the Single Electronic Mechanism for registration and payment of VAT;
- support Member States in the development of eHealth services;
- facilitate digital interaction between administrations and citizens/businesses for high-quality public services by engaging citizens, businesses and civil society in the collaborative design, production and delivery of public services and to facilitate interaction between public administrations and businesses and citizens.

This action plan includes actions to be launched in **2016 and 2017**. Further actions may be needed to achieve the objectives set out within each of the policy priorities. Stakeholders (including a group of Member States) may also propose actions for implementation under the eGovernment Action Plan, through an interactive digital engagement platform.