

[eGovernment in]

Estonia

Eesti



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Disclaimer:

This document is not intended to be exhaustive. Its purpose is to provide an overview of the general eGovernment status in Estonia. Even though every care has been taken to ensure accuracy, the information herein should be treated as indicative and no responsibility for errors can be assumed. Neither the European Commission, nor any person acting on its behalf can be held responsible for the use that could be made of the information provided.

Country Profile

Basic data and indicators

Basic Data

Population (1 000): 1 340.2 inhabitants (2011)*

GDP at market prices: 14 305.3 million Euros (2010)

GDP per inhabitant in PPS (Purchasing Power Standards, EU-27 = 100): 64.0 (2010)

GDP growth rate: 2.3 % (2010)

Inflation rate: 2.7 % (2010)

Unemployment rate: 16.9 % (2010)

Government debt/GDP: 6.7 % (2010)

Public balance (government deficit or surplus/GDP): 0.2 % (2010)

*Provisional value**

Source: [Eurostat](#)

Area: 45 000 km²

Capital city: Tallinn

Official EU language: Estonian

Currency: Euro

Source: [Europa website](#)

Political Structure

Estonia is a **parliamentary republic**.

Legislative power lies within the unicameral Parliament, called the State Assembly (*Riigikogu* in Estonian). The Assembly has 101 members, elected by popular vote, to serve four-year terms. Members are elected on the basis of a proportional system, and a 5 % splinter party threshold applies for those wishing to take part in parliamentary activities.

Estonia's Head of State is the [President](#), elected for a five-year term by the *Riigikogu*. The [Government](#), exercising executive power, is formed by the [Prime Minister](#), nominated by the president and a total of 14 ministers. The Government is appointed by the President with the approval of the Parliament.

Estonia is divided into 15 counties and 227 urban and rural municipalities (towns and parishes), whose powers and responsibilities are established by the Local Government Organisation Act of June 1993. The Government of each county is led by a County Governor, who represents the national Government at regional level and is appointed by the Central Government for a term of five years. Local self-government is exercised solely at the municipal level.

The [Constitution](#) of the Republic of Estonia was adopted on 28 June 1992.

Estonia became a member of the European Union on 1 May 2004.

Head of State: President [Toomas Hendrik Ilves](#) (since 9 October 2006).

Head of Government: Prime Minister [Andrus Ansip](#) (since 12 April 2005).

Information Society Indicators

Percentage of households with Internet access: 68 % (2010)

Percentage of enterprises with Internet access: 96 % (2010)

Percentage of individuals using the Internet at least once a week: 71 % (2010)

Percentage of households with a broadband connection: 64 % (2010)

Percentage of enterprises with a broadband connection: 88 % (2010)

Percentage of individuals having purchased/ordered online in the last three months: 13 % (2010)

Percentage of enterprises having received orders online within the previous year: 11 % (2009)

Percentage of individuals using the Internet for interaction with public authorities: obtaining information 46.9 %, downloading forms 35.5 %, returning filled forms 35.1 % (2010)

Percentage of enterprises using the Internet for interaction with public authorities: obtaining information 77 %, downloading forms 75 %, returning filled forms 64% (2009)

Source: [Eurostat](#)

Editorial notice: Statistical indicators referenced in this section reflect those of Eurostat at the time the Edition is being prepared.

eGovernment History

Main developments and key milestones (in reverse chronological order)

For the latest developments, see: [ePractice news for eGovernment](#)

Recent News

November 2011

- ▶ A new version of the State Portal '[eesti.ee](#)' goes live. The development of the portal, led by the State Information System's Authority, is based on user involvement and their feedback. One of the major benefits of the new version is that search for information is much faster, as articles, services and contacts are better interconnected. Another important innovation is the 'My Data' section, which stores all of a user's application records and documents as well as email communications, calendar of events, notifications, etc.
- ▶ During the same month, Tallinn, the capital of Estonia, is awarded with the European Public Sector Award 2011 for citizen eServices. The city receives the award, granted by the European Institute of Public Administration, for its virtual centre and development of fully automatic eServices.

September 2011

- ▶ On 9 September 2011, a Memorandum on Mutual Assistance is signed between Estonia and Greece. The objective of the co-operation is the reduction of corruption and bureaucracy through ICT. To this end, a strategic plan will be elaborated. In addition, Estonia will share its experience with the national ID-card, digital signing and other eState projects.
- ▶ Between 26-28 September 2011, an international eGovernment conference ICEGOV (International Conference on Theory and Practice of Electronic Governance), organised under the auspices of the UN, is held in Tallinn, Estonia. The conference brings together eGovernment officials, academics, representatives of civil society and enterprises from about 60 countries all over the world in order to jointly discuss the present and future of eGovernment as well as to facilitate best practice.
- ▶ On 27 September 2011, the annual information society conference is held in Tallinn. This year's conference focuses on copyright in the information society, aiming to analyse the topic from a balanced viewpoint, taking into account the interests and rights of creators, users and the industry.

August 2011

Information Society Yearbook 2010, compiled by the Department of State Information Systems of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications, is published at: <http://www.riso.ee/>.

July 2011

The [Estonian Environmental Board](#) launches an eServices portal with compilation and submission of environmental tax declarations as the first basic service provided through it.

June 2011

- ▶ Estonia's [eAnnual reporting](#) environment, which enables entrepreneurs to file annual reports electronically, is voted a **winner** in the category of 'eGovernment & Institutions' at the global eContent contest [World Summit Award](#) (WSA) 2011; it is [announced](#) on 16 June 2011. The eReporting environment enables entrepreneurs to submit their compulsory annual reports via the

[eBusiness Registry Company Registration Portal](#). It provides set forms with which to prepare the reports. These can then be digitally signed using an ID card, audited by the auditor, and sent electronically to the Commercial Register. As a result of this system, the processing of business data is made significantly quicker and easier, as the data can be processed immediately and be accessible to all interested parties in both the private and public sectors.

- ▶ Following a reorganisation on 1 June 2011, the public authority in charge of Estonia's information systems' security, is now [called](#) the [Estonian Information System's Authority](#) (EISA). It will help with and monitor the security of the information systems of private and public sector organisations. EISA was formerly known as the Estonian Informatics Centre. It has 11 main functions, but the reorganisation affected primarily the two departments dealing with **information security**. These are:
 - The [Department of Critical Information Infrastructure Protection](#) (CIIP), which evaluates the security of information systems in Estonia and carries out risk assessments. Every provider of an electronic service in Estonia is responsible for the security of their system; CIIP advises the owners of information systems on how to assess risks and how to protect their services.
 - The [Computer Emergency Response Team Estonia](#) (CERT-EE), which handles security issues involving the '.ee' domain. This department responds if ever Estonian websites or services should come under cyber attack, or if Estonian computers start distributing malware. It also has the capability to reverse engineer malware.

April 2011

A new information system for the management of draft laws is launched. The [Draft Information System](#) (*Eelnõude Infosüsteem* - EIS) provides access to all draft laws and other documents that have been submitted by government bodies for **consultation** and **approval** or sent to the Government. In addition, the system gives access to the EU draft laws, as well as other documents related to the EU decision-making process. The EIS allows users to follow proceedings of drafts, read all documents as well as comment upon them. The EIS integrates the functionalities of several separate operational systems. It was first used by the State Chancellery, but is now open to all.

March 2011

On 6 March 2011, Parliamentary Elections are held in Estonia. For the fifth time in a row, Estonians are able to cast their votes over the Internet during the advanced polling days from 28 February to 2 March 2011. The number of Internet voters has been in constant increase constituting 24.3 % of all voters in 2011, indicating that **iVoting** has definitely found its place in Estonia. There is a novel component to this year's iVoting, as the mobile-ID is used for the first time for personal identification. Usage of mobile-ID makes the Internet voting especially convenient as in this case one does not need the ID card reader in his/her computer. A mobile phone with its respective SIM card acts as a card and a card reader at the same time.

February 2011

- ▶ The Estonian Government [launches](#) the [Rural Municipality Portal](#) in February 2011 that aims to increase the **transparency** of local governments and expand citizen participation. The service portal is based on an open source content management tool which allows for easy and uniform site administration. The developed solution includes a standard website structure for local governments, tools for site administration and built-in interfacing with public registers. This new web solution is beneficial to both site administrators and citizens who use local government services, as it offers a simple and efficient channel for carrying out various activities. All local governments can design and modify the website by using the themed sections supplied with the solution, thus permitting each government to maintain a unique website. The development of this portal was funded by EU Structural Funds.

- ▶ On 1 February 2011, the Estonian Police and Border Guard (*Politsei- ja Piirivalveamet*) [make available](#) a new type of digital identity, the mobile-ID, which enables users to provide **electronic identification** and a digital signature using a mobile phone. To apply for a mobile-ID, a person must have a valid ID-card, PIN codes and a card reader, and a valid contract with a mobile service provider which provides those interested with a SIM card. The mobile-ID, valid for three years, can be obtained through an electronic application on the website of the [Police and Border Guard](#).

The mobile-ID can also be used for **electronic voting** in elections through a mobile-ID SIM card with PIN codes and certificates, a computer with Internet connection and a mobile phone. The project 'Mobile applications for identity card issuance and the creation of a technical solution' was funded by the EU's structural support of the [European Regional Development Fund \(ERDF\)](#).

January 2011

On 31 January 2011, the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund [opens](#) its [self-service employment portal](#) for public testing. Anyone interested could find and view in the portal public-sector job vacancies. Users can log in by using their ID-card or mobile-ID and then create their own CV, apply for jobs, manage their own work requests, review the statements made to the Unemployment Insurance Fund about the outcomes and decisions, and inform them of any changes to their data or situation. By using their ID-card or mobile-ID to log in, employers can manage their own company's job offers and search for suitable candidates among the users of the self-service environment.

In the future, job seekers will have the opportunity to book an interview with an Unemployment Insurance Fund adviser, as well as to submit applications for unemployment benefits, unemployment insurance and business start-up grants. There is also the capability for employers to manage their contracts and forward the information relating to performance (placement, wage subsidy, etc.).

News 2010-2001

2010

- ▶ Since *August 2010*, the section of the '[Festi.ee](#)', aimed at companies, is [updated](#) and translated into English to promote cross-border business and public services to the benefit of European companies. The section for companies of '[Festi.ee](#)' works as a Point of Single Contact that enables service providers operating all over Europe to solve the formalities needed for starting or continuing their business activities in the European Union (EU). The revamped environment will make it more convenient for European companies to find the most complete and exhaustive information on starting and making business in Estonia and to use relevant eServices, in a single place. The translation of the portal content into English aims to foster cross-border cooperation through the [STORK](#) project, which creates opportunities to use the eServices of other European countries.

'Diara' is an open source application that [allows](#) public administrations to use the Internet in order to **organise** polls, referenda, petitions, public inquiries as well as to record electronic votes using electronic identity (eID) cards; its first version went [online](#) at the end of *August 2010*. The application was developed with the support of the city of Tallinn and of the Estonian College of Technology and was made available at the [OSOR Forge](#), the OSOR's software development website. The Estonian version of the application is already available on search engines' forge.

- ▶ On *1 July 2010*, Estonia switches to **digital-TV**.

On *5 July 2010*, new domain rules come into force in Estonia, making the '.ee' country code top-level domain (ccTLD) significantly more accessible. While according to the previous rules, only companies could obtain '.ee' domains, private individuals and foreigners will now be able to obtain them too. In addition, a person will be able to register several domains. The new regime introduces a dual-level registration, the interaction with registrants being delegated to registrars by the [Estonian Internet Foundation](#).

- ▶ The [VOLIS pilot](#) project - an Internet-based information system for local governments - is [launched](#) in the municipality of Jõgeva on *11 June 2010*. VOLIS follows the best eGovernment practices and contributes to a simpler and faster processing of services within the local governments. According to the Estonian Minister for Regional Affairs, the introduction of VOLIS promotes participatory democracy and makes the decision-making process at local government level more open. Registered users can access the VOLIS system via their ID-card, or by using SIM card-based identification.

According to the [findings](#) of a [research study](#) executed in *June 2010*, 75 % of the Estonians who used the public electronic services are very satisfied. 1 020 Estonian residents were interviewed for this study, in the framework of the 'Information society awareness' campaign, which is funded by the [European Union Structural Funds](#) in Estonia.

- ▶ The Estonian Government [approves](#) on *1 April 2010* an amendment bill to the [Electronic Communications Act](#) and the [Information Society Services Act](#). This bill regulates the use of individuals' electronic contact data for sending out commercial emails. The approved bill foresees that direct marketing messages, including emails, faxes, SMS and MMS can only be sent with the recipient's prior consent.
- ▶ In *February 2010*, the Government of Estonia approves the [Implementation Plan for 2010-2011](#) of the [Estonian Information Society Strategy 2013](#). The document sets out six priority areas: increasing the knowledge, skills and participation of individuals; develop Estonia's next generation broadband network; develop electronic business environments; develop public services; large-scale uptake of eID; and, increase the interoperability of State information systems.
- ▶ In *January 2010*, a **digital prescriptions system** is launched in Estonia, freeing the patients from the fear of losing or forgetting their paper prescriptions and considerably reducing the time doctors and pharmacies spend on them.

A month-long campaign entitled '**Gateway to eEstonia**' is launched in *January 2010* to promote State Portal [eesti.ee](#) both to the general public and to service providers. The objective of the campaign is to increase users' awareness of the portal and invite them to provide feedback on how to improve the website and increase its user-friendliness.

2009

- ▶ On *1 October 2009*, the **Estonian Informatics Centre** - EIC (*Riigi Infosüsteemide Arenduskeskus* - RIA) [opens](#) its Department for Critical Information Infrastructure Protection (CIIP). CIIP aims to create and run the defence system for Estonia's critical information infrastructure.
- ▶ In *August 2009*, Estonia's largest ICT companies establish the **Estonian Broadband Development Foundation** with the objective to have developed, by the end of 2015, the basic infrastructure of the new generation broadband network in Estonian rural areas.
- ▶ In *July 2009*, the Government of the Republic approved the [amended version](#) of the 'Estonian Information Society Strategy 2007-2013'. The update concerns measure 4.1.1, 'Broadening technological access to digital information' to which a chapter was added on the development of broadband internet. In addition, the Estonian 'Rural Development Plan 2007-2013' is amended in the summer of 2009 to allow for the use of resources of the EU recovery package.
- ▶ During the second week of *May 2009*, the first company in Estonian business history is [created](#) in the Company Registration Portal with a Finnish ID card, without the founders of the company having had to leave their desks to have the company officially registered in Estonia. The [Estonian Company Registration portal](#) which opened to the users of Finnish ID-cards at the end of last year also accepts digital signatures from Portugal, Belgium and Lithuania.

2008

- ▶ In *August 2008*, entrepreneurs are [invited](#) to activate their email address on the [eGovernment Portal](#) to avoid **company identity theft** and detect it when it occurs. Businesses which subscribe to the service will receive an automatic notification when the Commercial Register receives an application for altering an entry.
- ▶ In *May 2008*, the Estonian Government adopts a **Cyber Security Strategy**. Cyber security in Estonia is primarily based on reducing the vulnerability of the cyberspace in the nation as a whole. This is accomplished through the implementation of domestic action plans, but also through an active international cooperation which supports the enhancement of cyber security.
- ▶ Since *April 2008*, residents of the Estonian capital city, Tallinn, can [apply](#) for and renew parking permits electronically on <https://www.parkimine.ee/en> using their eID card, Mobile-ID or Internet banking authorisation codes. The payment of the granted permits is performed online.
- ▶ As of *15 February 2008*, Estonians [making use](#) of the improved Tax and Customs Board's online [service](#) to submit their **tax returns** electronically can benefit from refunds well before those who have chosen to complete theirs on paper.

2007

- ▶ During the *last quarter of 2007*, a new version of the [Estonian State portal](#) results from the merge of the former State Information portal and the Citizen portal, creating a single integrated service. Access to information and eServices on the new portal depends on whether the user is a citizen, entrepreneur or State official.
- ▶ During *December 2007*, a new, user-friendly **tax and customs** web service is [launched](#). Following a consultation period with Internet users, the website's sections have been designed to match the needs of different user groups, whether they are private persons or representatives of legal entities.
- ▶ In *November 2007*, the [Ministry for Economic Affairs and Communications](#) approves the programme 'Raising Awareness about the information society' whose objective is to inform citizens on the possibilities of the information society. The programme is to be implemented over the period 2007-2013 by the [Estonian Informatics Centre](#) with a total budget of 50 million Estonian kroons (approx. € 3.2 million), funded from the EU Structural Funds.
- ▶ In *September 2007*, the Informatics Council – an advisory committee for the Government of Estonia – approves the [two-year Implementation Plan](#) (2007-2008) of the Estonian information society Strategy 2013, promoting the development of a citizen-centred and inclusive information society, as well as the advancement of the knowledge-based economy.
- ▶ In *August 2007*, the Estonian Tax and Customs Board begins offering a new **eService** to local authorities which enables them to make inquiries on the income of the taxpayers living in their area.
- ▶ Due to the cyber-attacks against Estonia's governmental and private web pages, the Government approves an Action Plan to fight cyber-attacks in *July 2007*. The plan, implemented by the ministries in charge of Economic Affairs and Communications, Defence, Internal Affairs and Justice, aims to create a strong legal basis for fighting cyber-crime and seeks to improve the processes for preparing for such emergencies.

Furthermore, the [Osalusveeb](#) website is [launched](#); it allows everyone (Estonian citizens, associations, civil society stakeholders) who has registered as a user to express opinions on drafts published by the Government.

- ▶ Since *June 2007*, Estonian businesses can [submit](#) their annual accounting reports electronically through the [Company Registration Portal](#).
- ▶ Launch of the [Mobile-ID service](#) in *May 2007*. Mobile-ID [enables](#) the identification of a person and the signature of digital documents via mobile phone, giving greater freedom for performing transactions that require personal identification.

- ▶ In *April 2007*, Estonia's governmental and private web pages [suffer](#) coordinated cyber-attacks.
- ▶ On *4 March 2007*, Estonia [holds](#) the world's first national general elections with an **Internet voting** option. A total of 30 275 citizens uses this option to register their preferences for the [Estonian Parliament](#) (*Riigikogu*).
- ▶ In *February 2007*, the newly launched [Company registration portal](#) makes it possible for start-up companies to set up a new company electronically, in just a couple of hours, using an eID card.

[Regulations](#) for X-Road, the middle-tier data exchange layer enabling Government databases to communicate with each other, are also published that month.

- ▶ The '[Estonian Information Society Strategy 2013](#)' enters into force on *1 January 2007*. It is conceived as a sectoral development plan, setting out the general framework, objectives and respective action fields for the broad use of ICT in the development of the knowledge-based society and economy in Estonia for the period 2007-2013. The plan focuses on the use of IT to improve quality of life and increase citizen involvement in public life.

Moreover, citizens can [request](#) an electronic voter card through the [eGovernment portal for citizens](#) by *31 January 2007*. Once registered for the eVoter card, citizens will no longer receive paper voter cards through normal mail.

2006

- ▶ In *December 2006*, the **Estonian Informatics Centre** (RIA) [conducts](#) a legal analysis to assess the legitimacy of electronic communications between the State and citizens. The study coincides with the introduction of a new service called the 'Notification Calendar' on the eGovernment [portal](#).
- ▶ In *July 2006*, for the third year in a row, Estonian students taking national examinations can [register](#) on the Estonian [Citizen's Portal](#) to receive their results either by email or on their mobile phones via SMS. Results reach examinees as soon as the marks are entered into the central database.

Moreover, the Estonian Government [launches](#) a new service enabling Estonian high school graduates to **apply** to universities **online**. This new service is available on the Citizen's portal, or on the new Common Admissions Information Portal ([SAIS](#)).

- ▶ In *May 2006*, Estonia's [Computer Emergency Response Team \(CERT\)](#) is officially [presented](#). This new unit of the Estonian Informatics Centre deals with security incidents that occur on Estonian networks, carries out preventive actions and contributes to awareness-raising on Internet security.

During that same month, leaders of the largest banks and telecommunication companies as well as the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications [sign](#) a co-operation agreement to launch a nationwide '[Computer Protection 2009](#)' initiative so as to increase end-user PC protection in Estonia while making the country the most secure information society in the world by 2009.

- ▶ Publication of the [Estonian IT Interoperability Framework](#), (version 2.0) in *April 2006*.
- ▶ In *March 2006*, the new initiative [Küla Tee 3](#) (VillageWay 3) is launched. Its objective is to improve access to permanent Internet connection in sparsely populated rural areas by guaranteeing quality Internet coverage of 90 % of Estonia's territory.

Moreover, the Estonian Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications [releases](#) the annual report '[IT in Public Administration of Estonia - Yearbook 2005](#)'. It presents the main achievements in the eGovernment field in 2005, the latest figures relating to the information society progress in Estonia and a brief description of the Government's 'Information Policy Action Plan 2006'.

2005

- ▶ In *November 2005*, Estonia launches a nation-wide **Information Security policy** which specifies and coordinates the upcoming eSecurity related initiatives, aiming to create a secure 'eEnvironment' for business and consumers.

- ▶ In *October 2005*, Estonia [becomes](#) the first country in the world to enable its citizens to vote over the Internet for political elections. To vote online, users must insert their eID cards into readers connected to their computers and log on to the [Internet voting](#) website.
- ▶ In *June 2005*, the Government adopts the [Information Policy Action Plan for 2006](#).
- ▶ In *April 2005*, the Estonian Parliament approves the [Estonian Broadband Strategy](#) setting out the principles for the development of fast Internet connections until 2007.

2004

In *May 2004*, the Estonian Government adopts a new information society policy called [Principles of the Estonian Information Policy 2004-2006](#). An [Information Policy Action Plan for 2005](#) is also adopted.

2003

- ▶ In *May 2003*, Finland and Estonia [sign](#) an agreement to harmonise the concepts and practices between the two countries regarding digital signature, document format and exchange. The project, codenamed '[OpenXAdES](#)', is an open initiative which promotes the 'universal digital signature'.
- ▶ In *March 2003*, the Estonian Government [launches](#) its **eGovernment portal** [eesti.ee](#). The site is intended to provide a single, one-stop umbrella for the many Government services already online, as well as for all new services being developed.

2002

- ▶ In the *summer of 2002*, together with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Open Society Institute (OSI), the Estonian Government establishes an [eGovernance Academy \(EGA\)](#) to enable Estonia's neighbours to benefit from its eGovernment experience and expertise.
- ▶ In *January 2002*, Estonia starts the introduction on national [electronic ID cards](#). The card functions are to be used in any form of business, governmental or private communications.

2001

- ▶ In *December 2001*, the '[X-Road](#)' system ('X-tee' in Estonian) is launched. 'X-Road' is a middle-tier data exchange layer enabling governmental databases to communicate.
- ▶ In the *summer of 2001*, the Estonian Government launches an **innovative eDemocracy portal**, TOM (*Täna Otsustan Mina* – 'Today I Make Decisions') whose aim is to enhance citizens' participation in the public decision-making process. This portal has since then been renamed to '[Osalusveeb](#)'.
- ▶ In *February 2001*, the Government approves an updated Information Policy Action Plan.

News 2000 and before

- ▶ Launch of the 'eTaxBoard' application in *2000*. 'eTaxBoard' enables taxpayers to file, view and correct their income tax returns online, but also to file VAT returns and submit VAT refund applications, to calculate their social tax and view their tax account balances.
- ▶ The year *1998* marks the adoption of the country's first information society strategy, the '[Principles of the Estonian Information Policy](#)', complemented by an Information Policy Action Plan.

The Government-wide backbone network [EEBone](#) is launched in the same year.

eGovernment Strategy

Main strategic objectives and principles

Estonian Information Society Strategy 2013 (2007-2013)



The '[Estonian Information Society Strategy 2013](#)' was approved on 30 November 2006 by the Estonian Government and entered into force on 1 January 2007. This strategy has been designed as a sectoral development plan, setting out the general framework, the objectives and the respective action fields for the broad use of ICT in the development of a knowledge-based society and economy in Estonia for the period 2007-2013.

This latest strategy takes into account the objectives and priorities of the EU-level policy framework, namely: the initiative '[i2010: A European Information society for growth and employment](#)' and the related '[i2010 eGovernment Action Plan](#)'.

The strategy is dedicated to an ICT vision for Estonia, based on the beliefs that the country is a constantly developing, inclusive society, raising the living standard of everyone and that the wide take-up of ICT will improve citizens' quality of life as well as actively involve them in public life. Thus the strategy aims to place more emphasis on: the development of a **citizen-centric** and **inclusive** society, a **knowledge-based economy** as well as a **transparent** and **efficient** Public Administration.

Actions and measures

For each component of this 'Vision', actions and measures are being taken in three **fields of action**, as follows:

Action field I: Development of a citizen-centric and inclusive society

In the information society, most of the information is stored in a universal digital form. To ensure citizen welfare, citizens must possess the skills and have the willingness to use the opportunities created by the information society, while benefiting from a **multi-access channel** to digital information that suits their needs. In line with the strategy, by 2013, 75 % of Estonian residents should be using the Internet, while household Internet penetration should amount to 70 %. Moreover, by 2010, all public sector websites complied with the Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) criteria. To such an end, the following actions are foreseen:

- ▶ broadening technological access to digital information;
- ▶ improving skills and widening possibilities for participation.

Action Field II: Development of a knowledge-based economy

The strategy foresees that by 2013, the productivity per employee in Estonian enterprises will account for 75 % of the EU average and that the share of ICT enterprises in the national GDP will amount to 15 %. To reach this objective, the following measures will be taken:

- ▶ promoting ICT uptake by enterprises;
- ▶ increasing the competitiveness of the Estonian ICT sector.

Action field III: Development of a citizen-centric, transparent and efficient Public Administration

In line with this objective, the Administration should function efficiently while collecting, using and managing data necessary for the provision of public goods in a common and systematic manner. Public sector processes must be transparent and easy to understand. In addition, public services for citizens

and businesses must be fully available electronically, widely used and structured around users' needs. By 2013, the strategy sets the objective of 80 % of citizen satisfaction and 95 % of business satisfaction with regard to the use of public sector eServices. In this light, the following measures will be taken:

- ▶ improving the efficiency of the public sector;
- ▶ providing user-friendly public eServices.

Implementation Plan (2009-2011)

eGovernment in Estonia is part of the broader Information Society Policy under the responsibility of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications. Therefore eGovernment strategy is embodied in strategic documents related/focused on information society and IT. The most relevant recent document is the [Implementation Plan for 2009-2011](#) of the [Estonian Information Society Strategy 2013](#), giving an overview of the activities on the Information Technology and Telecommunications front. The main **areas** of focus of the implementation plan are:

- ▶ the development of the ICT's export abilities, including international relations, sales and marketing;
- ▶ the education of the labour force on the ICT sector, by popularising the IT field, the quality of professional education, etc;
- ▶ the promotion of intra-association cooperation;
- ▶ the facilitation of cooperation with other professional associations on the uses of information and communication technology;
- ▶ the cultivation of electronic communications;
- ▶ the increase of ICT companies' social responsibility.

The Plan seeks to ensure that the development of Estonia is understood, reckoned with and appreciated as an information society based on the category of information. Thus it aims at securing the existence of initiatives fostering the development of the information society in the election platforms of Estonian political parties and boosting ICT management capacities in the governing system of Estonia. In this view, the Estonian Association of Information Technology and Telecommunications foresees the creation of a work group focusing on developing the area of information society, participate in defining the parties' expectations on this field, setting the goals and priorities of the activity plan and launching a development process of the ICT sector's development programme.

Information Security Policy (2009-2011)

In November 2009, Estonia launched a nationwide [Information Security Policy](#) that specifies and coordinates the upcoming eSecurity-related initiatives. The policy notably aims to create a secure '**eEnvironment**' for **business** and **consumers**.

The main **goal** of the Estonian Information Security Policy is to found a secure, security-aware, internationally cooperating and enabling Estonian information society. Specific goals include the elimination of non-acceptable risks, the defence of basic human rights, information security awareness and training, participation in international eSecurity-related initiatives, as well as competitiveness of economy.

Secure eGovernment must be based on appropriate **legislation**, **standards** and **procedures**, such as security requirements for databases, services, and State procurement. Regulations in this field are coordinated by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications, together with the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

Information society Strategy for Local Governments (2008-2011)

In 2008, the Ministry of Internal Affairs elaborated a development plan called '[Information society strategy for local governments 2008-2011](#)'. The main **aims** of the Strategy in question are the following:

- ▶ introducing electronic public administration to all local governments;
- ▶ develop Internet-based tools for citizens' involvement in the organisation of local life;
- ▶ ensuring that all local government officials are aware of ICT possibilities;
- ▶ develop the preconditions for the use of eServices in all local governments;
- ▶ establish organisations for the coordination of information society development in counties.

Previous eGovernment Strategies

Principles of the Estonian Information Policy (2004-2006)

This strategy set three year **long-term objectives** for the Estonian information policy:

- ▶ introducing eServices to all state agencies together with respective training and awareness-raising activities for the whole society;
- ▶ keeping the level of ICT use in Estonia at no less than the average level of the EU, ensuring thus the efficiency of the Estonian economy and society in general;
- ▶ increasing the export capacity of the IT sector.

The strategic document underlines that for the **short-term**, concerning the years 2004–2006, Estonia would proceed with the following **goals**:

- ▶ developing eServices for citizens, entrepreneurs and public sector institutions;
- ▶ promoting eDemocracy, eLearning and eInclusion;
- ▶ increasing the efficiency in the public sector;
- ▶ facilitating the interaction between the ICT industry and eBusiness;
- ▶ establishing IT security;
- ▶ cultivating a strong position at the international arena.

Principles of the Estonian Information Policy (1998-2003)

'[Principles of the Estonian Information Policy](#)' was the first strategic document to present ICT principles serving as a basis for an action plan for establishing an information society. The action plan, in turn, is the basis for all Government agencies to present specific proposals to the Cabinet, on an annual basis, together with schedules, sources of finances and responsibilities for the implementation of information policy programmes. The Government foresees the development of an information policy that:

- ▶ promotes and ensures democracy in the Republic of Estonia;
- ▶ supports the development of an information infrastructure;
- ▶ supports the creation of a competitive economy, especially through demonopolisation, speeding up the restitution of property, the development of electronic commerce and electronic banking;
- ▶ supports the development of Estonian culture and language, considering also values deriving from cultural diversity;
- ▶ supports the modernisation and improvement of State defence as a result of developments in information technology.

eGovernment Legal Framework

Main legal texts impacting on the development of eGovernment



eGovernment Legislation

Current status

There is currently no overall eGovernment legislation in Estonia.

Freedom of Information Legislation

[Public Information Act](#) (2001)

The first version of the [Public Information Act](#) (PIA) took effect in January 2001. A newly revised, updated [Public Information Act](#) entered into force on 1 January 2008. The Act covers State and Local Agencies, legal entities in public law and private entities that are conducting public duties including educational, health care, social or other public services. Any person may make a request for information, which is registered; the holder of information must respond within five working days. Fees may be waived, if the information is requested for research purposes. Departments and other holders of public information have the duty to maintain websites and post an extensive list of information on the Web. These entities are also required to ensure that the information is not 'outdated, inaccurate or misleading'. In addition, email requests must be treated as official requests for information. The Act is enforced by the [Data Protection Inspectorate](#). Since 1 January 2008, the Act has also been regulating the field of the former [Databases Act](#) (in force from 1997 to 2007).

[Archives Act](#) (1998)

The Archives Act entered into force on 1 May 1998. The Act sets the principles for collecting, evaluating, archiving, preserving, accessing archival documents and for archiving activities. It furthermore sets the guidelines for private records entered in the archives' register and the transfer of ownership of private records also entered in the archives' register.

Data Protection/Privacy Legislation

[Personal Data Protection Act](#) (1996)

The Personal Data Protection Act (PDPA) entered into force on 19 July 1996. The Act was amended in 2003, to be made fully compliant with the **EU Data Protection Directive 95/46/EC**, and once again [amended](#) in January 2008. The Act protects the fundamental rights and freedoms of persons with respect to the processing of their personal data, in accordance with the right of individuals to obtain freely any information that is disseminated for public use.

The [2008 version](#) of the Act introduced several changes. Firstly, the previous classification of personal data into three groups (non-sensitive personal data, private personal data and sensitive personal data) has been replaced by two data categories: (1) 'personal data' and (2) 'sensitive personal data', the latter being the sub-class under special protection. Secondly, all processed personal data are protected and registered by Chief processors (i.e. controllers) with the [Data Protection Inspectorate](#), the data protection supervision authority. Moreover, the new PDPA Act extends all general principles applying to

the processing of personal data and to the processing of the **personal identification code** (the unique number assigned to every Estonian citizen and resident).

[Consumer Protection Act](#) (2004)

This Act entered into force on 15 April 2004 and it regulates the offering and sale, or marketing in any other manner, of goods and services to consumers by traders. Furthermore, it determines the rights of consumers as the purchasers or users of goods or services, and provides for the organisation and supervision of consumer protection and liability for violations of this Act.

[System of Security Measures for Information Systems](#) (2008)

This Regulation entered into force on 1 January 2008 and establishes the system of security measures for information systems used for processing the data contained in state and local government databases and for information assets related therewith. The system consists of the procedure for the specification of security measures and the description of organisational, physical and IT security measures to protect data. However, it is underlined that this Regulation does not apply to security of information systems processing state secrets.

eSignatures Legislation

[Digital Signatures Act](#) (2000)

Approved on 8 March 2000, the Digital Signatures Act (DSA) entered into force on 15 December 2000. The Act provides for the use of digital signatures and digital ink, and the conditions of certification and oversight procedures for time-stamping services. It, basically, grants similar legal value to digital and handwritten signatures while setting an obligation for all public institutions to accept digitally signed documents. The Act introduces the use of digital stamps, namely, the technical and organisational means to set up data collection system, which uses digital ink-holder of the certificate to prove the integrity of the digital document and a document of their relationship. The Act was [amended](#) on 31 December 2007, and its last [amendment](#) took place on 31 December 2010.

eCommerce Legislation

[Information Society Services Act](#) (2004)

The information society services act was passed on 14 April 2004 and entered into force on 1 May 2004. It implements EU Directive [2000/31/EC](#) on certain legal aspects of information society services, in particular electronic commerce, in the Internal Market. It establishes the requirements pertaining to information society service providers, as well as the organisation of supervision and liability in the case of violation of these requirements. The Act was lastly [amended](#) on 21 January 2010.

eCommunications Legislation

[Electronic Communications Act](#) (2004)

The Electronic Communications Act was passed on 8 December 2004 and entered into force on 1 January 2005 in order to implement the [EU Regulatory Framework for Electronic Communications](#).

The purpose of this Act is to create the necessary conditions to promote the development of electronic communications networks and communications services while ensuring the protection of the interests of users of such services. The Act provides requirements for: publicly available electronic communications networks and communications services; radio-communication; management of radio frequencies and

numbering; apparatus and State supervision over the compliance with the requirements. The Act was lastly amended on 16 January 2011 and [entered](#) into force on 23 March 2011.

[National Broadcasting Act](#) (2007)

The National Broadcasting Act entered into force on 1 June 2007, providing the legal status, objective, functions, financing, and organisation of management and activities of the Estonian National Broadcasting. The objective of National Broadcasting is to assist in the performance of the functions of the Estonian state provided by the Constitution of the Republic of Estonia.

[Digital television broadcasting](#) (2007)

Following the recommendation of the European Commission inviting Member States to complete the transition to **digital television broadcasting** by 2012 at the latest, Estonia started the transition process in January 2006. The necessary measures have been adopted by the Government and the legislative process is currently under way.

eProcurement Legislation

[Public Procurement Act](#) (2007)

A new Public Procurement Act came into force in May 2007, thus transposing the EU Directives on public procurement ([2004/17/EC](#) and [2004/18/EC](#)). It includes legal provisions enabling the further development of eProcurement (eAuctions, Dynamic Purchasing System, eCatalogues etc.) so as to give better opportunities for taking forward a fully electronic Procurement tendering process.

It is worth mentioning that the [previous version](#) of the Public Procurement Act (October 2000) had already established rules for the eNotification of public tenders through the country's Public Procurement State Register.

Re-use of Public Sector Information (PSI)

[Public Information Act](#) (2001)

The Public Information Act covers the provisions of the EU Directive [2003/98/EC](#) on the re-use of public sector information (PSI). Estonia thus notified full transposition of the PSI-directive in July 2009.

eGovernment Actors

Main roles and responsibilities

National eGovernment

Policy/Strategy

[Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications](#)

The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications holds political responsibility for the development of the State information policy. It elaborates the state's economic policy and economic development plans, while also drafts the respective legislation bills, in a variety of fields, among which, informatics, development of state information systems, research, and development and innovation.

[Department of State Information Systems \(RISO\)](#)

The Department of State Information Systems (RISO) of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications plays a major role in the elaboration of the Estonian information society Policy. It embarks on developing information society-related activities in the field of information technology and on the preparation of draft legislation in the relevant fields.

[Estonian Association of Information Technology and Telecommunications \(ITL\)](#)

The ITL is a non-profit organisation, which actively takes part in the preparation of State policy documents, such as the 'Estonian Information society Strategy 2013'.

[Estonian Informatics Council](#)

The Council is responsible for the delivery of the general principles and proposals for drafting the ICT strategy development.

Coordination

[Department of State Information Systems \(RISO\)](#)

The Department of State Information Systems (RISO), as part of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications, is the main actor in coordinating governmental ICT policy and information society policy. In more detail, RISO coordinates: the state information policy and the consequent development of sustainable energy development projects in the initiation and implementation of information society; the development of national information systems regarding international cooperation within its jurisdiction and the initiated national information systems related to IT standardisation.

[Estonian Information System's Authority \(EISA\)](#)

Since 1 June 2011, the Estonian Informatics Centre has been re-organised to the Estonian Information System's Authority (EISA). The Authority's mission is to "coordinate the development and management information system so that Estonian citizens are served in the best possible way." It coordinates all Public Key Infrastructures related to the operation of ICT and Information Technology, like the State portal www.eesti.ee, the middleware system X-Road, the Government backbone network EEBone, the administration system of the State information system (RIHA) and the electronic document exchange centre (DVK). It is also liable to coordinate the state information system development projects and the preparation and participation in international projects. Finally, EISA also monitors the legislation process concerning the management information system requirements.

[Estonian Association of Information Technology and Telecommunications \(ITL\)](#)

The ITL is a non-profit organisation whose primary objectives consist in: coordinating the co-operation of the Estonian information technology and telecommunications companies, educational institutions as well

as promoting their co-operation towards the development of information society in Estonia. Main activities of the association include the popularisation of ICT and the amendment of legislation. The central coordination provided by ITL, deals with strategic planning, setting priorities, ensuring financing and creating cooperation networks while ensuring their functionality.

[Estonian Informatics Council](#)

The Estonian Informatics Council is an advisory committee for the Government of Estonia. Made up of experts, it is the body in charge of advising and coordinating implementation of the State information policy.

Implementation

[Department of State Information Systems \(RISO\)](#)

The Department of State Information Systems, part of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications, is responsible for the development and the implementation of State IT strategies at central level.

[Estonian Information System's Authority \(EISA\)](#)

EISA implements Estonia's national eGovernment strategy, through the State portal www.eesti.ee, the EEBone network, the State information system (RIHA) and the electronic document exchange centre.

Government Departments and Agencies

Government Departments and Agencies are responsible for the implementation of the departmental eGovernment projects falling within their respective fields of competence. Since Estonia is a highly decentralised country when it comes to the information society organisation, they play a very important role in the implementation of action plans and projects.

Support

[Estonian Informatics Council](#)

Besides its role in coordination and policy formulation, the Estonian Informatics Council is an expert committee advising the Government on ICT matters in a horizontal manner.

[CERT Estonia](#)

The Computer Emergency Response Team of Estonia (CERT Estonia), established in 2006, is an organisation responsible for the management of security incidents in '.ee' computer networks. Its task is to assist Estonian internet users in the implementation of preventive measures in order to reduce possible damage from security incidents and to help them in responding to security threats. CERT Estonia deals with security incidents that occur in Estonian networks or incidents that have been notified of by citizens, or institutions either in Estonia or abroad.

[Estonian Information Technology Foundation \(EITF\)](#)

EITF is a non-profit organisation aiming to assist in the preparation of the highly qualified IT specialists and to support information and communication technology-related developments in Estonia. For these purposes, the Foundation has established and manages the Estonian IT College and administers '[Tiger University](#)', the National Support Programme for ICT in Higher Education.

[eGovernance Academy](#)

The eGovernance Academy is a non-governmental, non-profit organisation, which aims to promote the use of ICT in the work of Government and in democratic practices. Its mission is to train and advise leaders and stakeholders in using information and communication technology (ICT) to increase government efficiency and to improve democratic processes with the aim of building open information societies. The Academy is a regional learning centre set up by the Republic of Estonia, the [United Nations Development Programme \(UNDP\)](#) and the Information Programme of the Open Society Institute.

Audit/Assurance

[National Audit Office](#)

The role of the National Audit Office (*Riigikontroll*) is to promote reforms while supporting public bodies in their efforts to create, through their activities and services, best value for the taxpayers. In this context, the National Audit Office assesses the performance (economy, efficiency and effectiveness) and regularity of the activities of Public Administration, and furthermore provides recommendations to assist the Parliament and the Government in improving the operation of the State.

Data Protection

[Data Protection Inspectorate \(DPI\)](#)

The Data Protection Inspectorate is an independent agency placed under the authority of the Ministry of Justice. The DPI supervises the legality of the processing of personal data and databases, as well as the organisation of data protection activities. To accomplish that, it acts as: a commissioner (ombudsman) and preliminary court; an auditor and a licensor; an educator and consultant; a designer of legal practices; a political consultant and an enforcer and a punisher.

[AS Sertifitseerimiskeskus](#)

AS *Sertifitseerimiskeskus* (SK) is the Certification Authority (CA) providing certificates for the Estonian electronic ID card and related services pertaining to the use of these certificates while giving legally-binding digital signatures. The authority's mission is to ensure the reliability and integrity of the electronic infrastructure underpinning the Estonian 'eID card' project, and to offer reliable certification and time-stamping services. It also functions as a competence centre for the eID card and spreads the knowledge necessary for creating electronic applications for the card. To this end, AS *Sertifitseerimiskeskus* has created '[DigiDoc](#)', a universal system for giving, processing and verifying digital signatures. 'DigiDoc' can be connected to any existing or new software, but its components are also a stand-alone client programme and web portal.

Regional & Local eGovernment

Policy/Strategy

[Ministry of Internal Affairs](#)

The Ministry of Internal Affairs has prepared a '[Municipalities Information Society Programme](#)' for the period 2008-2011 and an [Action Plan](#) for the years 2008-2011.

Other

[Association of Estonian Cities](#)

The Association of Estonian Cities is a voluntary union established for representing the common interests and arranging co-operation among cities and rural municipalities. The Association's main goal is to ensure the development of Local Governments through joint activities. The Association is also in charge of the [Local Government Portal](#) (KOP) created 2003, providing information, news and any development related to local government.

[Association of Municipalities of Estonia](#)

This Association gathers the majority of Estonian rural municipalities within the 15 Estonian counties, communicating between them through a dedicated Intranet system, bringing together local government units, and contributing to the development and strengthening of self-government administration and decentralisation of power under the principles of democracy.

eGovernment Who's Who

Main eGovernment decision-makers and executives

Minister responsible for eGovernment



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eGovernment Infrastructure

Main eGovernment infrastructure components

Portals

['eesti.ee': eGovernment portal](#)

Estonia's eGovernment portal was first launched in March 2003 on the basis of the 'eCitizen' project which was initiated in 2002. Since then, the portal has been constantly renewed. In the last quarter of 2007, a new version of the portal merged the former 'State Information portal' and the 'Citizen portal', creating a **single** integrated service. This portal coordinates the information provided and the services offered by various State institutions. It features a safe Internet environment for communication with the State and offers reliable information and **eSolutions** for citizens, entrepreneurs and officials respectively. The access to relevant information and eServices on the portal indeed depends on whether the user is a citizen, entrepreneur or State official.

The State portal's environment allows users authenticated with their national eID card to: access and check their personal details; perform transactions with municipal and Government bodies; complete and convey online forms and applications; sign documents digitally; create email addresses with the suffix @eesti.ee; and receive email or SMS notifications. In addition, it gives access to other registry services (e.g. the Forest Registry) on more than 20 national databases. Based on the data held in the State Commercial Register, entrepreneurs using the portal can access **transactional services** for businesses.

['DigiDoc' portal](#)

'DigiDoc' portal is available for Estonian ID-card and Estonian and Lithuanian Mobile-ID users and allows for digital signing, verification of validity of digital signatures, forwarding of documents to other users of the portal and receiving documents from other users of the portal. The [DigiDocService](#) provides a quick and easy way to raise the security of any web service to meet the highest demands. It makes it possible to carry out authentication based on strong authentication devices from different vendors and provides service providers with the opportunity to enter legal signatures on any created data within their service, which provides long-term validity and proof of action in courts across the EU.

[Rural Municipality Portal](#)

The portal was launched in February 2011 by the Estonian Government, with the view to increase the transparency of local governments and expand citizen participation. The concept of the portal is innovative as it is based on an open source content management tool, which allows for easy and uniform site administration. The developed solution includes a standard website structure for local governments, tools for site administration and built-in interfacing with public registers.

Network

[ASOnet's 'EEBone'](#)

'EEBone' (*PeaTee*) is the broadband network of data communication among Government institutions. It is a Government-wide backbone network, connecting more than 20 000 computers from all Government offices across the country, providing secure access to the Internet and the Government's Intranet. The network was launched in October 1998, and its development was based on the **backbone network 'ASOnet'** elaborated by the Border Guard Administration, the Customs Board and the Police Board in

1993. The network currently provides approximately 50 % of all administrative services to the various associations.

The Estonian Information System's Authority (EISA) is highly involved in running the network, either as a mediator of customised value-added data services, or as a provider of customer service. The use of the backbone network is financed centrally from the State budget and is free-of-charge for subscribed clients. Clients only have to pay to access the backbone network and to determine the access connection service themselves.

X-Road Middleware

Launched in December 2001, the '**X-Road**' (*X-Tee*) is a middle-tier data exchange layer enabling Government databases to communicate with each other. It was initially developed as an environment facilitating the formulation of queries to different databases in a standardised way. The system allows officials, as well as legal and natural entities to search data from national databases over the Internet within the limits of their authority, using a unified user interface.

In addition, the system has been further developed to enable the creation of eServices capable of **simultaneously** using data held in different databases. Several extensions have thus been developed for the 'X-Road' system. These include: writing operations to databases, transmitting huge data sets between information systems, performing successive search operations of data in different data sheets, providing services via web portals.

The 'X-Road', as one of the cornerstones of the Estonian State Information system, offers the following services: authentication; authorisation; MISP (mini-portal system); register of simple queries; queries to various databases and registers; opportunities to write registers; sending large amounts of data over the Internet; secure data interchange, recording logs and search tracking option; running of citizen portal and operator's portal; central and local monitoring and collection service description in a special database (WSDL mode).

eIdentification/eAuthentication

Electronic ID card

Estonia started issuing national ID cards in January 2002. The card, which fulfils the requirements of Estonia's Digital Signatures Act, is mandatory for all Estonian citizens and residing foreigners over 15 years of age; applications can be made [online](#). It is meant to be the **primary document** for identifying citizens and residents and is used in any form of business – governmental or private communications. It is furthermore a valid travel document within the EU. Since 1 January 2007, the card issued by the Citizenship and Migration Board, has become valid for 5 years (instead of 10 years in the past).

In addition to being a physical identification document, the card has advanced electronic functions facilitating secure authentication and providing a legally binding digital signature for public and private online services. An electronic processor chip contains a personal data file, a certificate for authentication (along with a permanent email address Name.Surname @eesti.ee for eCommunications with the public sector), a certificate for digital signature, and their associated private keys, protected with PIN codes. The certificates contain only the holder's name and personal code (national ID code). The data file is valid as long as the identity card is, and so are the certificates, which thus have to be renewed every five years.

[Mobile-ID](#)

'Mobile-ID' is the ID-card based identity verification and digital signature solution for users of mobile phones in Estonia. This means that the mobile phone, based on a standardised SIM application, will act as a secure signing device. Thus, similarly to the eID card, the mobile-ID enables **authentication** and **digital signing** of documents, bearing the same legal value. The user's certificates are maintained on the telecom operator's SIM card; to use them, the user has to enter a PIN code.

The new mobile-ID service (wireless PKI) was launched in May 2007 by the mobile operator [EMT](#), in co-operation with several banks and the Certification Centre, [AS Sertifitseerimiskeskus](#). This service allows accessing **Internet banking services** without entering eBanking codes. To authenticate oneself securely with the mobile-ID, the user will click on a dedicated button in the web environment. Upon completion of this action, s/he will be requested to enter his/her authentication PIN number. Once this operation has been completed, authentication is performed. The same process applies to the signing of digital documents. The main advantages of the mobile-ID include **user-friendliness** and **convenience**; the computer no longer needs to be equipped with a card reader, or have a special additional software installed.

[ePassport](#)

To comply with EU regulation [2252/2004/EC](#) on standards for security features and biometrics in passports and travel documents issued by Member States, the systems of the Estonian Citizenship and Migration Board (CMB) have undergone considerable changes that have been implemented step-by-step. The **first biometric passports** were delivered as of 22 May 2007, containing the holder's biometrical data. Changes in the organisation of work and supporting systems of the CMB are planned to occur at both customer service and document issuance systems' levels.

eProcurement

[eProcurement Estonia](#)

The Estonian eProcurement environment enables Contracting Authorities to carry out a procurement procedure from start to end in the same web environment - prepare and publish notices, upload tender documents, receive eTenders, award contracts and carry out dynamic purchasing systems and eAuctions. Authorities are also able to communicate with interested persons and tenderers and carry out inquiries into other state registers, for example to check payment of taxes or registration in the Commercial Register. The environment is divided into the [Information Portal](#) and the Public Procurement Register. Instructions and guides are available in the portal while procurements are published in the [Public Procurement Register](#).

[Public Procurement State Register](#)

Established in 2001 and maintained by the Public Procurement Office, the Public Procurement State Register is a register where all public procurement notices are published electronically. The register uses CPV standards in the catalogue, and all the information in the register is publicly accessible over the Internet, free-of-charge.

Knowledge Management

[Document Exchange Centre \(DVK\)](#)

The document exchange centre is an information system providing a common central document exchange service for various enterprise content management (ECM) systems, as well as other information systems dealing with documents. The Centre is responsible for interfacing dispersed information systems (via the X-Road Middleware); preserving documents in the short-term; processing documents in the near future; and support services in the proceeding of documents.

The DVK is an infrastructure for the transmission of documents (i.e. a mediation layer for document exchange services of information systems) relying on the X-Road as a transport-level infrastructure. These can be letters, draft legislation, financial documents (including eInvoices and payment orders), electronic forms and documents related to public procurement procedures).

['eKool' web application](#)

'eKool' is a simple web application that connects all education stakeholders in an easy way over the Internet, helping them to collaborate and organise their teaching/learning related information. 'eKool' is available as either a direct web service for end users, or as a hosted white label service for distributing/promoting partners.

Other Infrastructure

[Administration System of the State information system \(RIHA\)](#)

The objective of RIHA is to ensure the **interoperability** of public sector information systems and the **re-use** of technical, organisational and semantic resources, so as to give a clear view of the State registers and the services provided by them. The creation and maintenance of Government databases is governed by the [Public Information Act of 2007](#) which establishes an Administration System for State information systems (RIHA), where all the databases and information systems must be registered.

RIHA includes metadata about existing public sector databases – ranging from the information on the administrators of the databases to the eServices offered and the technical data concerning the environment/platform. **Registration** in RIHA is **web-based**; the user is authenticated and permissions are given by using the national electronic ID card.

In the same web-based environment, requests to other information systems can be made in order to launch a **new X-road-based service**. RIHA additionally administers two supporting systems of State registers: the system of classifiers and the address data system. The system of integrated registers allows applying new principles of administrative arrangements: citizen-orientation, flexibility, swiftness, as well as cost and time effectiveness for both the citizens and the State.

eGovernment Services for Citizens

Availability and sophistication of eServices for Citizens

The information in this section is based on the common list of 20 basic public services contained in the annual report '[Digitising Public Services in Europe: Putting ambition into action - 9th Benchmark Measurement](#)' prepared for the European Commission, Directorate General for Information Society and Media, December 2010.

The 12 services for citizens are as follows:

1. Income taxes: declaration, notification of assessment
2. Job search services by labour offices
3. Social security benefits
4. Personal documents: passport and driver's licence
5. Car registration (new, used, imported cars)
6. Application for building permission
7. Declaration to the police (e.g. in case of theft)
8. Public libraries (availability of catalogues, search tools)
9. Certificates (birth and marriage): request and delivery
10. Enrolment in higher education/university
11. Announcement of moving (change of address)
12. Health related services (interactive advice on the availability of services in different hospitals; appointments for hospitals)

1. Income taxes: declaration, notification of assessment

Responsibility: Central Government, Tax and Customs Board

Website: <http://www.emta.ee/?lang=en>

Description: The eTaxBoard (*eMaksuamet*) enables taxpayers to file, view and correct their income tax returns online and to check their tax account balances. Citizens can use their electronic ID card as the identification method for accessing eTaxBoard. Those having submitted their tax returns online can benefit from accelerated tax refunds.

2. Job search services by labour offices

Responsibility: Central Government, Unemployment Insurance Fund

Website: <http://www.tootukassa.ee/?lang=en>

Description: The website provides an updated list of all job offers at national and regional labour offices in Estonia, with a short description of each job, deadlines for application and contacts for applying.

3. Social security benefits

a. Unemployment benefits

Responsibility: Central Government, Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund

Website: <http://www.tootukassa.ee/?lang=en>

Description: Information and forms to download.

b. Child allowances

Responsibility: Central Government, Social Insurance Board

Website: http://www.eesti.ee/eng/teemad/perekond/riigi_rahaline_abi_lastega_peredele/pere_ja_lastetoetused/

Description: Pursuant to the Parental Benefit Act, the online Parental Benefit service was launched at the beginning of 2004. The service is 100 % electronic: persons without Internet access can go to the Social Insurance Board to submit their application, but even there the application is filed electronically with the assistance of Insurance Board employees. The whole process is paperless. Based on the X-road middleware system connecting different State databases, this service does not require citizens to submit data already known by the State.

c. Medical costs (reimbursement or direct settlement)

Responsibility: Central Government, Estonian Health Insurance Fund

Website: http://www.eesti.ee/eng/teemad/health_care/health_insurance/

Description: The Health Insurance Fund covers the cost of health services required in case of illness regardless of the amount of social tax paid by each citizen. Since there is no refund system in Estonia, if the health service provider has a contract with the Estonian Health Insurance Fund, then all costs are directly paid to him/her by the Fund. The patient pays only a reduced personal, non-refundable contribution. If the health service provider does not have a contract, the patient must pay for the health service himself/herself. Internet banking clients or holders of the Estonian eID card can use eServices available through the national portal to check the validity of their health insurance, their address and the payment of sickness benefits.

d. Student grants

Responsibility: Central Government, Ministry of Education and Research, Higher Education institutions

Website: <http://www.hm.ee/?1>

Description: With the [Study Allowances and Study Loans Act](#) (2003), Estonia has established a system of study allowances and created the possibilities to obtain study loans. The main objective of the system of study allowances, only accessible at a certain level of income and for students who successfully progress in their studies, is to motivate students to study full time and successfully complete the study programme within the nominal period. Study loans secured by the State intend to give full-time students who are not entitled to receive study allowances the possibility to finance their studies. Applications, attributions and payments of study grants are managed directly by Higher Education institutions.

4. Personal documents: passport and driver's licence

a. Passport

Responsibility: Central Government, Police and Border Guard Board

Website: <http://www.politsei.ee/en/teenused/isikut-toendavad-dokumendid/eesti-kodaniku-pass/>

Description: Information and application forms to download. The website allows for online application for ID documents. This service requires the use of an electronic signature.

b. Driver's licence

Responsibility: Central Government, Estonian Road Administration Department

Website: <http://www.mnt.ee/index.php?id=12659>

Description: Information only. Applications must be submitted in person at the Estonian Road Administration Department.

5. Car registration (new, used, imported cars)

Responsibility: Central Government, Estonian Road Administration Department

Website: <http://www.mnt.ee/index.php?id=10663>

Description: Information and forms to download. Car registration applications must be submitted in person at the Estonian Road Administration Department (ARK).

6. Application for building permission

Responsibility: Local Government

Website: http://www.eesti.ee/eng/teemad/eluase/eluaseme_soetamine/ehitus_ja_remont/

Description: Information only. Planning permission applications are handled by local authorities.

7. Declaration to the police (e.g. in case of theft)

Responsibility: Central Government, Estonian Police

Website: <http://www.politsei.ee/en/>

Description: An online crime reporting service is available on the website of the Estonian Police.

8. Public libraries (availability of catalogues, search tools)

Responsibility: Central Government, National Library of Estonia

Website: http://www.libdex.com/country/estonia/tallinn/library_22677.html

Description: Online catalogue and reservation facility.

9. Certificates (birth, marriage): request and delivery

Responsibility: Local Government

Website: <http://www.eesti.ee/eng/teemad/perekond/>

Description: Information only. Requests for certificates are handled by the local authorities.

10. Enrolment in higher education/university

Responsibility: Central Government, Higher Education institutions

Website: https://www.sais.ee/index_en.html

Description: Enrolment in higher education is managed by Higher Education institutions. An enrolment information system called SAIS (*SissAstumise InfoSüsteem*) has been developed to enable the entire enrolment, processing, decision-making and information in a single environment on the Internet for participating universities. The system uses the eID card as an authentication tool. It can however be entered through one of the Estonian Internet Banks. Since the results of high school examinations are already in the online database, students can see immediately if they have been accepted to a participating university.

11. Announcement of moving (change of address)

Responsibility: Central Government (Estonian Population Register)/Local Government

Website: <http://w3.andmevara.ee/?lang=en>

Description: On the Estonian Population Register's website, it is possible for citizens to make the announcement of moving by sending a digitally signed document. In that case, a person is automatically identified. Consequently, there is no need for any other identifying document.

12. Health related services (interactive advice on the availability of services in different hospitals; appointments for hospitals)

Responsibility: Ministry of Social Affairs

Website: <http://www.digilugu.ee/portal/page/portal/Digilugu/ETerviseProjektid>

Description: The East Tallinn Central Hospital became the first in Estonia to introduce an [ePatient portal](#) in April 2008. Patients can access the portal from the hospital's website. Through the portal, patients can view their medical records, book doctors' appointments and pay consultation fees. It is also possible to order an appointment reminder via SMS or email. The project consists of four sub-projects: Electronic Health Record (EHR); Digital Imaging; Digital Prescription; and Digital Registration.

Further information on the services and on the latest official online sophistication ratings is available in the ['Digitising Public Services in Europe: Putting ambition into action - 9th Benchmark Measurement'](#) report, prepared for the European Commission, Directorate General for Information Society and Media, December 2010.

eGovernment Services for Businesses

Availability and sophistication of eServices for Businesses

The information in this section is based on the common list of 20 basic public services contained in the annual report '[Digitising Public Services in Europe: Putting ambition into action - 9th Benchmark Measurement](#)' prepared for the European Commission, Directorate General for Information Society and Media, December 2010.

The 8 services for businesses are as follows:

1. Social contributions for employees
2. Corporate tax: declaration, notification
3. VAT: declaration, notification
4. Registration of a new company
5. Submission of data to statistical offices
6. Customs declarations
7. Environment-related permits (incl. reporting)
8. Public procurement

1. Social contributions for employees

Responsibility:	Central Government, Tax and Customs Board
Website:	http://www.emta.ee/index.php?id=1595
Description:	Estonian employers are required by law to pay 'social tax' for all persons employed. The tax rate is 33 % of the taxable salary. 20 % is allocated to pension insurance and 13 % to health insurance. The social tax can be calculated, filed and paid online using the eTaxBoard (<i>eMaksuamet</i>).

2. Corporate tax: declaration, notification

Responsibility:	Central Government, Tax and Customs Board
Website:	http://www.emta.ee/?id=29268
Description:	The eTaxBoard (<i>eMaksuamet</i>) enables corporate taxpayers to file, view and correct their corporate tax returns online, and view their tax account balances.

3. VAT: declaration, notification

Responsibility:	Central Government, Tax and Customs Board
Website:	http://www.emta.ee/index.php?id=1839
Description:	The eTaxBoard (<i>eMaksuamet</i>) enables corporate taxpayers to view their VAT returns, submit VAT refund applications and view their tax account balances.

4. Registration of a new company

Responsibility:	Central Government, Centre of Registers and Information Systems
Website:	https://ariregister.rik.ee/index.py?lang=eng&sess=4103377947748922771166435596176847060211831525471019353451977613
Description:	The Centre of Registers and Information Systems is a State Agency working under the Ministry of Justice. Its main function is the administration of a number of central databases and registers, e.g. the Estonian enterprises register. Since February 2007, entrepreneurs have been enabled to submit data to the Commercial Register through the new Company registration portal . They can submit registry documents processed within the next working day, at the earliest. Persons are identified and procedures are performed using the Estonian eID card and digital signature. Information only. Company registration services are handled by local courts.

5. Submission of data to statistical offices

Responsibility:	Central Government, Statistical Office of Estonia
Website:	https://estat.stat.ee/
Description:	Data can be submitted electronically to the Statistical Office. The eSTAT is a web-based channel which has been available since February 2006 for filing official statistical reports. It offers an operational overview of the reports filed through different channels in the Statistical Office, as well as contacts with the providers of these reports.

6. Customs declarations

Responsibility:	Central Government, Tax and Customs Board
Website:	http://www.emta.ee/index.php?id=1939
Description:	The Estonian Tax and Customs Board developed an eCustoms application (eToll) that enables online filing of customs declarations. A web-based system called COMPLEX was launched in May 2006 for processing customs declarations. This system can be used from every computer with Internet access. The Tax and Customs Board updates and maintains the system on a day-to-day basis: users do not have to do it themselves; that allows greater savings for enterprises. Customs declarations can also be drawn up and submitted in XML-format. To use COMPLEX, a client can enter the eTaxBoard, via the Tax and Customs Board's web-page, or an Internet bank.

7. Environment-related permits (incl. reporting)

Responsibility:	Central Government, Ministry of the Environment, Estonian Environment Information Centre
Website:	http://klis.envir.ee/
Description:	Fully transactional service.

8. Public procurement

Responsibility:	Central Government, Public Procurement Office
Website:	https://riigihanked.riik.ee/lr1/web/guest/index
Description:	Established in 2001, the Public Procurement State Register is an 'eTenders' portal where all public procurement notices are published electronically.

Further information on the services and on the latest official online sophistication ratings is available in the ['Digitising Public Services in Europe: Putting ambition into action - 9th Benchmark Measurement'](#) report, prepared for the European Commission, Directorate General for Information Society and Media, December 2010.



European Commission - eGovernment Practice

eGovernment practice (epractice.eu) is an information and exchange service for European professionals.

The eGovernment factsheets are one of the epractice.eu services. The factsheets present an overview of the eGovernment status and progress in the European countries.

The eGovernment factsheets are produced and updated twice a year.

eGovernment practice is a joint initiative by the Directorate General Informatics and the Directorate General for the Information Society and Media.

Production/Publishing: eGovernment Practice Editorial Team, EUROPEAN DYNAMICS S.A.

