

[eGovernment in the]

European Union



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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 the European Commission. 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.

Information Society and eGovernment in the European Union

Overview on main strategic directions and achievements

Europe 2020 - a strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth

On 17 June 2010, the European Council adopted the '[Europe 2020 - A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth](#)' economic strategy. Europe 2020 sets out a vision for Europe's social market economy over the next decade, and rests on three interlocking and mutually reinforcing priority areas: **smart Growth**, developing an economy based on knowledge and innovation; **sustainable Growth**, promoting a low-carbon, resource-efficient and competitive economy; and **inclusive Growth**, fostering a high-employment economy delivering social and territorial cohesion.

Progress towards these objectives will be measured against five representative headline EU-level **targets**:

- ▶ raising to 75 % the employment rate for women and men aged 20-64, including a greater participation of young people, older workers and low-skilled workers, as well as a better integration of legal migrants;
- ▶ improving the conditions for research and development, in particular with the aim of raising combined public and private investment levels in this sector to 3 % of GDP;
- ▶ reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 20 % (or even 30 %, if a satisfactory international agreement can be achieved to follow Kyoto), compared to 1990 levels; increasing the share of renewables in final energy consumption to 20 %; and moving towards a 20 % increase in energy efficiency;
- ▶ improving education levels, in particular by aiming to reduce school drop-out rates to less than 10 % and by increasing the share of 30-34 years old having completed tertiary, or equivalent education to at least 40 %;
- ▶ promoting social inclusion, in particular through the reduction of poverty, by aiming to lift at least 20 million people out of the risk of poverty and exclusion.

The areas most in need of attention will be addressed by [7 flagship initiatives](#) at EU, national, local and regional levels. Within each initiative, both the EU and national authorities will have to coordinate their efforts so as to be mutually reinforcing. Within the framework of actions contributing to the Smart Growth priority area, the [Digital Agenda for Europe](#) programme constitutes a flagship initiative for recovering from the financial and economic crisis, and for lifting up the EU economy in the next decade by making the best use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). More information can be viewed at the Europe 2020 [website](#).

Digital Agenda for Europe

The [Digital Agenda for Europe](#) was proposed on 5 May 2010 by the European Commission and was [endorsed](#) on 31 May 2010 at the Transport, Telecommunications and Energy meeting of the Council of the European Union. Being the first flagship initiative within the framework of the Europe 2020 economic strategy, this ambitious action plan is aimed at delivering sustainable economic and social benefits from a digital single market, based on fast and ultra fast Internet and interoperable applications. To this end, the agenda outlines seven **priority areas** for action:

▶ **A new Single Market to deliver the benefits of the digital era**

Citizens should be able to enjoy commercial services and cultural entertainment across borders. However, EU online markets are still separated by barriers, which hamper access to pan-European telecom services, digital services and content. The Commission intends to open up access to legal online content by simplifying copyright clearance, management and cross-border licensing. Other actions include making electronic payments and invoicing easier, and simplifying online dispute resolution.

▶ **Improve ICT standard-setting and interoperability**

To allow people to create, combine and innovate, ICT products and services need to be open and interoperable.

▶ **Enhance trust and security**

Europeans will not embrace technology they do not trust - they need to feel confident and safe online. A better coordinated European response to cyber-attacks and reinforced rules on personal data protection constitute part of the solution. Actions could also potentially oblige website operators to inform their users about security breaches affecting their personal data.

▶ **Increase Europeans' access to fast and ultra fast Internet**

The 2020 target is internet speeds of 30 Mbps or above for all European citizens, with half European households subscribing to connections of 100Mbps or higher. Today only 1 % of Europeans have a fast fibre-based internet connection, compared to 12 % of Japanese and 15 % of South Koreans. The Commission will inter alia explore how to attract investment in broadband through credit enhancement mechanisms and will give guidance on how to encourage investment in fibre-based networks.

▶ **Boost cutting-edge research and innovation in ICT**

Europe must invest more in R&D and ensure our best ideas reach the market. The Agenda aims to inter alia leverage private investments with European regional funding and increase EU research funding to ensure that Europe keeps up with and even surpasses its competition. EU investment in ICT research is less than half compared to US levels (€ 37 billion compared to € 88 billion in 2007).

▶ **Empower all Europeans with digital skills and accessible online services**

Over half of Europeans (250 million) use the Internet every day, while another 30 % have never used it. Everyone, young or old, irrespective of social background is entitled to knowledge and skills, and needs to be part of the digital era; commerce, public, social and health services, learning and political life have increasingly been moving online.

▶ **Unleash the potential of ICT to benefit society**

We need to invest in smart use of technology and in the exploitation of information to seek solutions to reduce energy consumption, support ageing citizens, empower patients and improve online access for people with disabilities. One main objective is, by 2015, patients to have access to their online medical records wherever they are in the EU. The Agenda will also boost energy saving ICT technologies such as Solid State Lighting technology (SSL) which requires 70 % less energy compared to standard lighting systems.

In these seven areas, the Digital Agenda foresees some 100 **follow-up actions**, of which 31 would be legislative. Further information and relevant publications can be viewed at the Digital Agenda's [website](#).

European eGovernment Action Plan 2011-2015

The European [eGovernment Action Plan 2011-2015](#) was launched on 15 December 2010 during the '[Lift-Off Towards Open Government](#)' conference. The plan aims to realise the vision of the 5th Ministerial eGovernment Conference on 18 November 2009, in Malmö, Sweden (the 'Malmö Declaration'): by 2015 European public administrations become "... recognised for being open, flexible and collaborative in their interactions with citizens and businesses. They use eGovernment to increase their efficiency and effectiveness and to constantly improve public services in a way that caters for user's different needs and maximises public value, thus supporting the transition of Europe to a leading knowledge-based economy."

Based upon this declaration, the eGovernment Action Plan 2011-2015 identifies four political **priorities**:

▶ Empower citizens and businesses

Citizens and businesses are to be empowered by eGovernment services designed around users' needs to provide flexible and personalised ways of interacting and performing transactions with public administrations; these services should be developed in collaboration with users, whenever possible. Following this approach, public services can gain in efficiency and users' expectations will be better met, resulting in their increased satisfaction. Empowerment also means that governments should provide easy access to public information, improve transparency and allow effective involvement of citizens and businesses in the policy-making process.

▶ Reinforce mobility in the Single Market

eGovernment should support the further construction of a digital single market. However, substantial issues remain to be solved regarding transferability of public services such as those related to social security, health benefits, pensions and other personal services. Governments should develop services to increase the mobility of both citizens and businesses within Europe. 'Seamless' services for entrepreneurs should facilitate setting up and running a business all across Europe, while personal mobility of citizens should be increased to allow them to study, work, reside, receive health care and retire anywhere in the European Union. Moreover, easier provision of eGovernment services for citizens and businesses across borders should be achieved by proposing actions to reinforce the digital single market and to strengthen cooperation in this field.

▶ Enable efficiency and effectiveness

The actions on this priority will focus on using ICT and enabling organisational changes to deliver better, less intrusive, more sustainable and faster public services by reducing the administrative burden, improving organisational processes and promoting a sustainable low-carbon economy.

▶ Create the necessary key enablers and preconditions to make things happen

A number of technical and legal preconditions need to be put in place to enable the implementation of actions that will enhance eGovernment services in Europe. These include the promotion of interoperability across borders to allow - among others - sharing of information; deployments of one-stop-shop approaches; and Europe-wide use of (national) electronic identity solutions and payment schemes. Interoperability is to be supported by open specifications and the development of key enablers, such as electronic identity management and stimulation of innovation in eGovernment.

This eGovernment Action Plan for 2011-2015 aims at maximising the complementary nature of national and European policy instruments. It supports the transition from current eGovernment to a new generation of open, flexible and collaborative seamless eGovernment services at local, regional, national and European levels that will empower citizens and businesses. This plan is inline with the Europe 2020 economic strategy and complements the Digital Agenda for Europe towards a knowledge-based, sustainable and inclusive economy. More information is available at the plan's [official website](#).

Previous strategies

In March 2000, the Heads of State or Government of the Member States [agreed](#) on the following objective within the framework of the EU Summit in Lisbon: "By 2010, the European Union has to become the most competitive and dynamic **knowledge-based economy** in the world capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs, as well as greater social cohesion." This strategic approach became known as the '[Lisbon Strategy](#)' and came to cover a very wide range of policies to modernise Europe. After initially moderate results, on 2 February 2005, the European Commission proposed a '[New start for the Lisbon Strategy](#)' focusing on the European Union's efforts on two principal tasks - delivering **stronger, lasting growth** and **more and better jobs**. The European Council of March 2005, as well as the European Parliament and the European social partners, gave [full support](#) to the Commission's proposal to relaunch and refocus the Lisbon Strategy.

'European Information Society 2010'

In this context, in 2005, the European Commission launched a policy framework, embracing all aspects of the information, communication and audiovisual sectors. This framework was called '[i2010 - A European information society for growth and employment](#)' and provided the broad policy guidelines for the emerging information society in the years up to 2010. This strategy, also known as 'European Information Society 2010', constituted the successor to the previous **eEurope 2005** initiative and focused on the following three major **priorities** for Europe's information society and media policies:

- ▶ completion of a single European information space;
- ▶ strengthening of innovation and investment in ICT research;
- ▶ an Inclusive European information society.

The i2010 strategy was reviewed on an annual basis and the pertinent annual [reports](#) also updated i2010 related actions. The i2010 strategy was succeeded by the '[Digital Agenda for Europe](#)'.

Information Strategy and eGovernment in the European Commission

Main strategic objectives and principles

A Two-Tier Approach towards Modern Administrations

Virtually all European governments and most of European Union's public authorities at local, regional, national and European levels are engaged in modernising and even transforming themselves, with emphasis on **eGovernment**. The European Commission itself is promoting and following this track in order to support European integration in the most efficient manner. For the support of the **integration process**, a series of ICT-related actions have already been put in place. Several data exchange programmes between public administrations, established in the eighties, as well as the IDA, IDABC and currently the [ISA](#) programme have significantly contributed to the European integration and most of its policies.

Thereby, the European Commission follows a **two-tier approach**. At a **political** level, the Europe 2020 economic strategy and the [Digital Agenda for Europe](#) flagship initiative aim to deliver sustainable economic and social benefits from a digital single market based on fast and ultra fast Internet and interoperable applications.

At an **operational** level, the Commission needs to tackle two challenges: modernising its own 'internal' administration and operating professional trans-European services. Concerning the modernisation of its administration, the Commission in 2005 renewed its commitment to the **e-Commission initiative** which aimed at delivering better quality and more transparent services for staff and external stakeholders by 2010. This guarantees security of information, including protection of personal data, based on streamlined processes and interoperable information systems supported by a cost-effective, resilient and high performing ICT infrastructure.

Furthermore, special attention has been paid to the operation of **trans-European services** that support the implementation of EU legislation, from internal market regulations to consumer and health policies. Efficient operation of these services relies on online information services between public administrations across Europe, namely, those supported by the ISA programme.

[ISA](#) (Interoperability Solutions for European Public Administrations) programme

ISA (Interoperability Solutions for European Public Administrations) provides a framework that allows Member States to work together to create efficient and effective electronic cross-border public services. The programme supports and maintains the [European Interoperability Framework \(EIF\)](#) and contains **actions** on:

- ▶ [trust and security of information exchange](#);
- ▶ [interoperability architecture](#);
- ▶ [ICT implication assessment](#);
- ▶ [accompanying measures](#), such as [communication activities](#), [evaluation of progress in implementing the programme](#), and, among measures, the new [action on the ISA collaboration platform](#), which has resulted in the creation of the [Joinup](#) portal focusing on eGovernment, semantic interoperability and Open Source Software (OSS).

e-Commission

[e-Commission 2006-2010](#)

Adopted on 23 November 2005, the strategic framework '**e-Commission 2006-2010**' laid down the European Commission's approach to modernise its own administrative processes via ICT. The strategy was inline with the objectives of the [i2010 initiative](#) and was guided by two principles, namely **efficiency** and **transparency** and two dimensions, namely the **external**, for services to citizens, businesses and partner administrations and the **internal**, for services to its own staff.

Implementation along the external dimension was expected to affect areas such as the electronic management of the Taxation and Customs Union, the trading of greenhouse gas emissions, the structural funds and the internal market. Citizens would also benefit from a more interactive and user-friendly Europa site. The corresponding internal dimension would bring benefits such as modernised support systems for human resources, savings in paper, and effective financial, document and decision management. The Commission's staff would also enjoy a better work-life balance thanks to teleworking and videoconferencing facilities.

To assess maturity achieved or encompassed, a four-level **eGovernment maturity model** was employed by the framework:

- ▶ **Level 1 - Simple website**, where only information is provided online on public policies and administrative procedures.
- ▶ **Level 2 - Online government**, where, in addition, simple electronic interaction mechanisms are implemented (such as e-mail or web-based forms).
- ▶ **Level 3 - Integrated government**, where parts (but not all) of the administrative activity are automated. The services offered should not be based on simply revamped existing procedures, but they should be the product of genuine integration between interaction channels, back office information systems and administrative processes.
- ▶ **Level 4 - Transformed government**, where no paper forms are filled in and the administrative activity is automated end-to-end, crossing organisational boundaries. Services are built up from the viewpoint of internal and external users, rather than based on the structure of the particular organisation.

At the start of the framework (November 2005), the Commission was, on average, considered to have reached level 2 of the scale. The objective of the e-Commission strategy was to proceed to level 3 by 2010, i.e. to implement an **integrated Commission**.

[e-Commission 2006-2010 mid-term review](#)

The **e-Commission 2006-2010 mid-term review**, adopted in 2008, acknowledged homogeneous progress, with accomplishments in both external and internal dimensions, complemented by those in the organisational enablers' area; in particular in the ICT governance and methodological fields, as well as in the technical enablers' field (e.g. the provision of collaborative internet tools to support communication on European affairs). Progress towards all of the eight primary objectives of the initiative was observed, namely with respect to: better quality services, more transparent services, security of information, streamlined processes, interoperability, cost-effective infrastructure, resilient infrastructure, and highly performing infrastructure. Two areas required special attention in the period 2009-2010: interoperability and the streamlining of processes, for which specific additional actions were recommended.

Regarding the external dimension, in specific domains supported by information systems and their associated processes, the Commission may be considered to have reached maturity levels 3 or 4 of the model. For instance, the [New Computerised Transit System](#) (NCTS) which supports customs transit operations among the Member States is a fine example of maturity at level 4. However, as **integration** among such systems is still largely missing, the major challenge is to progress towards further integration of information systems and associated processes, within the limits defined by the existing

legal provisions, so as to ensure the consistency of services provided to partner administrations, businesses and citizens.

In 2009 and 2010, the e-Commission initiative focused on completing identified actions, such as fostering collaborative work with staff, citizens, national administrations and businesses through new Internet technologies (Web 2.0 tools including blogs, wikis, forums and portals). On 1 September 2010, as the e-Commission 2006-2010 initiative was approaching its end, the Directorate General of Informatics (DIGIT) of the European Commission [launched](#) an **external survey** to assess the progress achieved and to shape the new e-Commission 2011-2015.

e-Commission strategy for 2011-2015

The new **e-Commission strategy for 2011-2015**, has not appeared as yet, but preliminary [comments](#) by Maroš ŠEFČOVIČ, Vice-President of the European Commission responsible for inter-institutional relations and administration, at the opening of the conference on 'Administrative Reform' in Vienna, 10 November 2011, suggest that this will be centred around three guiding **principles**:

- ▶ harmonisation and convergence of business processes;
- ▶ reusability and interoperability of information systems and components;
- ▶ sharing of secure, resilient and consolidated, high quality services and IT infrastructure.

Legal framework

Main legal texts impacting on the development of eGovernment

Data Protection/Privacy

[Directive 95/46/EC](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 24 October 1995, on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data

To remove obstacles to free movement of data without diminishing the protection of personal data, Directive [95/46/EC](#) (the **data protection Directive**) was developed to harmonise national provisions in this field and to ensure that all citizens have equivalent protection across the Union. The directive, effective from 24 October 1998, applies to 'any operation or set of operations which is performed upon personal data', called 'processing' of data. Such operations include the collection of personal data, its storage, disclosure, etc. The Directive applies to data processed by automated means (e.g. a computer database of customers) and to data that are part of or intended to be part of non-automated 'filing systems'. Access to the latter can vary, for example, the filing system may contain traditional card paper files, with information presented in alphabetical order.

The data protection Directive does not apply to data processed for purely personal reasons or household activities (e.g. an electronic personal diary or a file with details of family and friends). It does not apply either to areas such as public security, defence or criminal law enforcement, which are outside the competence of the EC and remain a national prerogative. National legislation generally provides protection for individuals in these areas.

[Directive 97/66/EC](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 15 December 1997, on the processing of personal data and the protection of privacy in the telecommunications sector

Directive 97/66/EC specifically deals with the **protection of privacy** in telecommunications. It states that Member States must guarantee the confidentiality of communication by means of national regulations. Any unauthorised listening, tapping, storage or other kinds of interception or surveillance of communications is illegal. Where calling-line identification is offered, users must be given the option not to subscribe to this service, or not to have their identification revealed when making a telephone call. Conversely, subscribers to this service must have the option to reject incoming calls from individuals who have blocked their calling-line identification. Additionally, the Directive states that where printed or electronic telecommunication directories exist, individuals are entitled to have their data removed from the list, in principle, at no cost.

eCommerce

[Directive 2000/31/EC](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 8 June 2000, on certain legal aspects of information society services, in particular electronic commerce, in the Internal Market (Directive on electronic commerce)

Promoting the development of electronic commerce is one of the key factors in the effort to make the European Union the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world. Directive 2000/31/EC sets up the basic legal framework for electronic commerce in the internal market. It **removes obstacles** to cross-border online services in the European Union and provides legal certainty to businesses and citizens alike.

eCommunications

The electronic communications regulatory framework consists of one Framework Directive (Directive 2002/21/EC, of 7 March 2002) on a common regulatory framework for electronic communications networks and services and four specific Directives. This framework has been supplemented by the '[Telecoms Reform](#)', a new package of rules originally due to be transposed into national laws of the 27 Member States by May 2011.

Electronic communications regulatory framework (2002)

The Framework Directive and its four accompanying Directives of the original 2002 regulatory package are described below:

[Directive 2002/21/EC](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 7 March 2002, on a common regulatory framework for electronic communications networks and services (**Framework Directive**)

The aim of this Directive is to establish a harmonised framework for the regulation of electronic communications networks and services. It contains **horizontal provisions** serving the accompanying Directives, such as scope and general principles, basic definitions, general provisions on national regulatory authorities (NRA), the new concept of significant market power and rules for granting certain essential resources, such as radio frequencies.

In response to the **convergence of technologies** and the need for horizontal regulation of infrastructure, the framework covers all electronic communications networks and services, such as fixed-line voice telephony, mobile and broadband communications, cable and satellite television. On the other hand, the content of services delivered over electronic communications networks, such as broadcasting content or financial services, is excluded and so is telecommunications terminal equipment.

[Directive 2002/19/EC](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 7 March 2002, on access to and interconnection of electronic communications networks and associated facilities (**Access Directive**)

This Directive establishes rights and obligations for operators and for undertakings seeking interconnection and/or access to their networks. The principle is to allow competition rules to act as an instrument for market regulation. However, insofar as there is no effective competition on the market, the national regulatory authorities (NRAs) must act by imposing obligations on operators with significant market power. The objective is to establish a framework to **encourage competition** by stimulating the development of communications services and networks, and also to ensure that any bottlenecks in the market do not constrain the emergence of innovative services that could benefit the users. The approach adopted is technologically neutral, i.e. the Directive does not intend to introduce rules to affect technological progress but, instead, to establish a *modus operandi* to address market issues.

The Directive applies to all forms of communication networks carrying publicly available communications services. These include fixed and mobile telecommunications networks, networks used for terrestrial broadcasting, cable TV networks and satellite, as well as Internet networks used for voice, fax, data and image transmission.

[Directive 2002/20/EC](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 7 March 2002, on the authorisation of electronic communications networks and services (**Authorisation Directive**)

The provisions of this Directive cover authorisations for all **electronic communications networks** and services, whether they are provided to the public or not. However, they only apply to the granting of rights to use radio frequencies where such use involves the provision of an electronic communications network or service, normally for remuneration. The aim is to establish a harmonised market for electronic communications networks and services by limiting regulation to the minimum that is strictly necessary.

The main innovation is the **replacement of individual licences** by general authorisations, while a special scheme for attributing frequencies and numbers continues to exist. According to this principle, the provision of electronic communications networks or services may only be subject to a general authorisation. In other words, the undertaking concerned may be required to submit a notification but it may not be required to obtain an explicit permission or authorisation via any other administrative act by the national regulatory authority (NRA), before exercising the rights stemming from the authorisation.

[Directive 2002/22/EC](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 7 March 2002, on universal service and users' rights relating to electronic communications networks and services (**Universal Service Directive**)

The Directive intends to ensure the availability of a minimum set of high quality services that are available to all users at an affordable price, without distortion of competition. It lays down obligations with regard to the **provision** of certain **mandatory services**, such as the retail provision of leased lines. It also establishes end-users' rights and the corresponding obligations of undertakings that provide publicly available electronic communications networks and services.

[Directive 2002/58/EC](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 12 July 2002, on the processing of personal data and the protection of privacy in the electronic communications sector (**Directive on privacy and electronic communications**)

New technologies, and in particular the Internet and electronic messaging services, call for specific requirements to ensure that users have a **right to privacy**. The Directive tackles a number of issues of varying degrees of sensitivity, such as the retention of connection data by the Member States for police surveillance purposes (data retention), the sending of unsolicited electronic messages, the use of cookies, and the inclusion of personal data in public directories. In March 2006, it was amended by Directive [2006/24/EC](#) on the retention of data generated or processed in connection with the provision of publicly available electronic communications services or of public communications networks services. The aim of the latest Directive is to harmonise the provisions of the Member States concerning obligations incumbent on the providers of electronic communications services with respect to data retention.

The Telecoms Reform (2009)

The rapid change affecting the sector, notably with regard to the growth of Voice-Over-IP (VOIP) telephony services, as well as to the uptake of television services through broadband lines, resulted in an agreement on the reform of Telecoms in the EU, reached by the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers on 4 November 2009. Two additional Directives and one new Regulation were adopted:

[Directive 2009/140/EC](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 25 November 2009 (**Better Regulation Directive**)

This amended Directives 2002/21/EC (framework), 2002/19/EC (access) and 2002/20/EC (authorisation) of the 2002 regulatory framework.

[Directive 2009/136/EC](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 25 November 2009 (**Citizens' Rights Directive**)

This amended Directives 2002/22/EC (universal service) and 2002/58/EC (privacy and electronic communications) of the 2002 framework, as well as [Regulation \(EC\) No 2006/2004](#) on cooperation between national authorities responsible for the enforcement of consumer protection laws.

[Regulation \(EC\) No 1211/2009](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 25 November 2009

The regulation established the new Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications ([BEREC](#)) and the Office. The new body will help ensure **fair competition** and more **consistency of regulation** on the telecoms markets. The aim that BEREC replaces the present loose cooperation among national regulators in the form of the 'European Regulators Group' with a better structured and more efficient approach. BEREC decisions will be made, as a rule, by majority of heads of the 27 national telecoms regulators.

The most [prominent reforms](#) in the new package of rules for Europe's telecoms networks and services include:

- ▶ a right of European consumers to change, in one working day, fixed or mobile operator while keeping their old phone number;
- ▶ better consumer information;
- ▶ protecting citizens' rights relating to Internet access by a new Internet freedom provision;
- ▶ new guarantees for an open and more 'neutral' net;
- ▶ consumer protection against personal data breaches and spam;
- ▶ better access to emergency services, such as the 112 pan-European number;
- ▶ greater independence for national telecoms regulators;
- ▶ a new Commission say on competition remedies proposed by national regulators for telecoms markets;
- ▶ functional separation as a means to overcome competition issues;
- ▶ accelerating broadband access for all Europeans;
- ▶ encouraging competition and investment in next generation access networks.

eSignatures

[Directive 1999/93/EC](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 13 December 1999, on a Community framework for electronic signatures

This Directive establishes the legal framework at European level for electronic signatures and certification services. The aim is to make electronic signatures easier to use and to help them become legally recognised within the Member States. The Directive defines two new ideas: the **advanced electronic signature** and the **qualified certificate**. The main provision is that an advanced electronic signature based on a qualified certificate satisfies the same legal requirements as a handwritten signature. It is also admissible as evidence in legal proceedings. Furthermore, this Directive lays down the criteria that form the basis for legal recognition of electronic signatures by focusing on certification services, namely: common obligations for certification service providers; common rules on liability to help build confidence among users; and cooperative mechanisms to facilitate trans-border recognition of signatures and certificates with third countries.

eProcurement

[Directive 2004/17/EC](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 31 March 2004, on the coordination of the procurement procedures of entities operating in the water, energy, transport and postal services sectors

[Directive 2004/18/EC](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 31 March 2004, on the coordination of procedures for the award of public works contracts, public supply contracts and public service contracts

The Directives, which took effect on 30 April 2004, aiming to simplify, clarify and revise previous legislation in this area by introducing two new legal instruments. They also provide a **coherent framework** for **conducting procurement electronically** in an open, transparent and non-discriminatory way, establish rules for tendering electronically and fix the conditions for modern purchasing techniques based on electronic means of communication.

Re-use of Public Sector Information (PSI)

[Directive 2003/98/EC](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 17 November 2003, on the re-use of public sector information

The term Public Sector Information (PSI) refers to documents, databases and other information produced, collected and stored by public sector bodies. Thanks to the aid of ICTs, PSI can now be processed in an efficient, effective and user friendly manner, creating a variety of new opportunities for its exploitation. The Directive sets out a **framework** for the conditions of its reuse and aims to ensure equal treatment for commercial editors within the internal market. Public sector organisations authorising this type of reuse continue to hold copyright and related rights. They are, however, invited to exercise their copyrights in a way that facilitates re-use.

General information source: [Europa, Summaries of EU legislation](#)

Actors

Main roles and responsibilities

Policy/Strategy

Vice-President of the European Commission responsible for Inter-Institutional Relations and Administration

The [Vice-President of the European Commission](#) responsible for Inter-Institutional Relations and Administration is in charge and has full responsibility for the e-Commission strategy, European Commission's major initiative on e-Administration. In particular, the Vice-President supports and sponsors specific large-scale e-Commission activities in areas such as security, simplification of human resources management and administrative processes. He furthermore oversees the overall implementation of this strategy, so that it is inline with best practice examples on eGovernment.

Coordination/Implementation

Directorate-General for Informatics (DIGIT)

The mission of the [Directorate-General for Informatics](#) (DIGIT) is to enable the Commission to make effective and efficient use of Information and Communication Technologies in order to achieve its organisational and policy objectives. To this end, the DIGIT, in partnership with all relevant stakeholders, has the responsibility to:

- ▶ define the IT Strategy of the European Commission (EC);
- ▶ provide the EC and, whenever appropriate, other European Institutions and bodies with high quality and advanced IT infrastructure solutions and eServices;
- ▶ support services and telecommunications facilities;
- ▶ deliver the information systems required to support the EC corporate business processes within the framework of the e-Commission strategy;
- ▶ promote and facilitate, in full collaboration with European Public Administrations, the deployment of pan-European eGovernment services for citizens and enterprises-businesses.

The Directorate-General for Informatics is also responsible for the coordination of the e-Commission strategy and its implementation via the delivery of IT systems and services. Moreover, through the [ISA](#) programme, DIGIT facilitates the deployment of pan-European eGovernment services to administrations, citizens and enterprises - businesses.

DIGIT Unit B2 - Interoperability solutions for European public administrations (ISA)

The Unit coordinates the application of the [Interoperability Solutions for European Public Administrations](#) (ISA) programme, which facilitates efficient and effective cross-border electronic collaboration among European public administrations.

In the period 2005-2009, this objective was implemented under the [IDABC programme](#) on Interoperable Delivery of European eGovernment Services to public Administrations, Business and Citizens. To achieve its objectives, IDABC issued recommendations, developed solutions and provided services that enabled national and European administrations to communicate electronically and offer modern public services to businesses and citizens in Europe. The programme also provided financing to

projects that addressed European policy requirements and improved cooperation among administrations across Europe.

On 27 July 2009, the follow up programme [ISA](#), for the period 2010–2015, was finally [adopted](#) by the Council. ISA is based on the experience gained from IDABC and its [evaluations](#). It is aimed at facilitating efficient and effective electronic cross-border and cross-sector interaction among European public administrations, and at enabling the delivery of electronic public service through common solutions. Thereby, it focuses on ensuring availability of common frameworks (such as policies, specifications and methodologies), common services (including both applications and infrastructures), as well as generic tools (such as demonstrators and shared and collaborative platforms). Moreover, various sectors will also be supported in assessing the ICT implications of Community legislation and in planning the implementation of relevant solutions.

The first ISA work programme was adopted by the Commission on 30 June 2010 and is to be revised once a year to reflect changes in policies or priorities. The Commission implements the ISA work programme via public procurement procedures.

Individual DGs

Within the European Commission, individual Directorates-General are responsible for the implementation of IT solutions within the mandate of their respective competencies.

Audit/Assurance

Internal Audit Service (IAS) of the European Commission

Operating under the responsibility of the Vice-President for Administrative Affairs, the [Internal Audit Service](#) (IAS) is entrusted with auditing the internal control systems that exist within the European Commission. The aim is to assess their effectiveness and, more specifically, the performance of Commission's departments in implementing policies, programmes and actions with a view to achieving continuous improvement.

eGovernment Who's Who

Main eGovernment decision-makers and executives

Vice-President of the European Commission responsible for Inter-Institutional Relations and Administration



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Infrastructure

Main eGovernment infrastructure components of Pan European scope

Name: **European Interoperability Framework (EIF) for European public services**

Objective: **Interoperability**

Further information: http://ec.europa.eu/isa/documents/isa_annex_ii_eif_en.pdf

Description: The purpose of the European Interoperability Framework (EIF) is:

- ▶ to promote and support the delivery of European public services by fostering cross-border and cross-sectoral interoperability;
- ▶ to guide public administrations in their work to provide European public services to businesses and citizens;
- ▶ to complement and tie together the various National Interoperability Frameworks (NIFs) at European level.

This non-technical document addresses all those involved in defining, designing and implementing European public services. The document aims to contribute to the better functioning of the internal market by increasing interoperability among European public administrations.

The EIF (and the EIS) are maintained under the [ISA](#) programme.

Name: **European Interoperability Strategy (EIS) for European public services**

Objective: **Interoperability**

Further information: http://ec.europa.eu/isa/documents/isa_annex_i_eis_en.pdf

Description: Based on a joint vision, the EIS sets out a common, coherent approach to interoperability. The agreed vision is that, by 2015, interoperability will have significantly fostered European public service delivery. To achieve this, activities at EU and Member State level should be coordinated and interoperability governance at EU level should be established.

The strategy clusters future interoperability activities under three headings:

- ▶ Trusted information exchange
- ▶ Interoperability architecture
- ▶ Assessment of the ICT implications of new EU legislation.

These activities are to be supported by accompanying measures on awareness-raising and sharing of best practice.

The EIS (and the EIF) are maintained under the [ISA](#) programme.

Name:	CIRCA: Communication and Information Resource Centre Administrator
Objective:	Basic Infrastructure
Further information:	http://ec.europa.eu/idabc/en/document/6540/5644.html
Description:	<p>CIRCA is a simple and effective groupware, developed by the European Commission under the electronic Interchange of Data between Administrations (IDA) programme. It is a web-based application providing online services that offer a common virtual space for workgroups, enabling effective secure sharing of resources and documents.</p> <p>Based on Open Source Software (OSS), CIRCA has been widely used by the EU public administrations since 1996. To port its functionality to a new OSS platform, a new project, namely the Communication and Information Resource Centre for Administrations, Businesses and Citizens (CIRCABC), aims to ensure a sustainable evolution of CIRCA. The CIRCABC groupware is currently available for administrations, businesses and citizens.</p>

Name:	STESTA: Trans European Services for Telematics between Administrations
Objective:	Basic Infrastructure
Further information:	http://ec.europa.eu/idabc/en/document/2097/5644.html
Description:	<p>STESTA is the European Community's own private, IP-based network. It offers a telecommunications interconnection platform that responds to the growing need for secure information exchange between European Public Administrations, allowing officials from different Ministries to communicate at a trans-European level, in a safe and prompt manner.</p> <p>The STESTA network service is the continuation of the TESTA network which began in 1996 and entered its second phase in early 2000. It now connects almost all EU Institutions, EU agencies and Member States, while Initiatives to connect further administrations are currently ongoing, including those of Candidate Countries.</p>

Name:	IPM (Interactive Policy-Making) - Online Questionnaire Management System
Website:	http://ec.europa.eu/yourvoice/ipm
Description:	<p>IPM is a multilingual online questionnaire management system that handles all steps involved in a survey life cycle including design, test, translation and launch; collection of replies and analysis of results. It is a customisable open-source, web-based application, developed within the framework of the Interactive Policy Making (IPM) initiative. The system has also been used for the successful launch of more than 100 public consultations on the 'Your voice in Europe' web portal.</p>

Internal Administration Services

Internal Administration services

Name:	ABAC (Accrual Based Accounting) Information System
Objective	Accounting Information Management
Further information:	http://ec.europa.eu/budget/library/biblio/publications/modern_accounts/modernising_EU_accounts_en.pdf
Description:	<p>In December 2002, the Commission presented an ambitious action plan to switch its general accounts to accrual base as of 2005. Up to this point the known as 'cash accounting' approach was used: transactions were recorded only when cash was received or paid out, making it impossible to distinguish between the purchase of an asset and the payment of an expense. As planned, in January 2005, the new accounting system became operational and a new set of accounting rules came into force. This transition was supported by the development of a system of Accrual Based Accounting, or ABAC, which represents a significant evolution of the Commission's financial systems.</p>

Name:	SYSPER 2
Objective	Human Resource Management
Website:	https://intracomm.ec.europa.eu/SYSPER2/
Description:	<p>SYSPER2 is the Human Resource Management information system of the European Commission. It became operational in July 2001 and serves all of the more than 30 000 Commission staff. The system supports traditional personnel administration areas, such as recruitment, career management and time management, as well as further topics including job descriptions, performance assessments and the management of promotions.</p> <p>The design was guided by the 'uniqueness of information' principle: information has to be entered only once, at the source (e.g. by individual staff members or the middle management), and can be subsequently used by other system stakeholders through integration of their respective back-office systems, as well as by sharing common data via a central repository. Further information is available at: http://www.epractice.eu/cases/sysper2.</p>

Name:	e-Grefe
Objective	IT system for the management of the European Commission's decision-making process / procedures, documents and workflow
Further information:	N/A
Description:	e-Grefe is a workflow application which supports the decision making process of the European Commission. It enables electronic management of all documents adopted by the Commission. After adoption, e-Grefe forwards electronic copies of such documents (e.g. directives, regulations, decisions ...) to all relevant EU Institutions, as well as to the permanent delegations of the Member States and to the national parliaments and local governments in the EU. Due to wide availability, e-Grefe uses e-mail to send these sets of documents to national parliaments. Some recipients have integrated the accompanying XML descriptor files with workflow tools on their side.

eGovernment Services for Administrations

Important services to the European Public Sector

Name:	Animal Disease Notification System (ADNS)
Policy area:	Health & Consumer Protection
Further information:	http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/diseases/adns/index_en.htm
Description:	The operational objective of the Animal Disease Notification System (ADNS) is to ensure rapid exchange of information between the competent national authorities responsible for animal health and the Commission on outbreaks of important infectious animal diseases. Related information is inserted into the system by the designated competent authorities of the participating Member States.

Name:	Community Database on Accidents on the Roads in Europe (CARE)
Policy area:	Road Safety Policy
Further information:	http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/
Description:	<p>The CARE system was created on 30 November 1993 (93/704/EC) via a Council decision. Its purpose is to provide a tool to identify and quantify road safety problems throughout the European roads, evaluate the efficiency of road safety measures, determine the relevance of Community actions and facilitate the exchange of experience in this field.</p> <p>In contrast to most other existing international databases, the CARE system features a high level of disaggregation: it contains detailed data on individual accidents, as collected by the Member States. This approach allows for considerable flexibility in analysing accident-related data.</p>

Name:	European Environment Information and Observation Network (Eionet)
Policy area:	Environment
Website:	http://www.eionet.europa.eu/
Description:	<p>Eionet is a partnership network between the European Environment Agency (EEA), five European Topic Centres (ETCs) and a network of approx. 900 experts from 39 countries in over 300 national environment agencies and other relevant bodies. These constitute the National Focal Points (NFPs) and the National Reference Centres (NRCs).</p> <p>Organisations and individuals in the network are supported by an extensive information technology infrastructure, known as e-Eionet, aimed to ensure harmonised electronic collection, handling and provision of data reported on the European environment.</p>

Name:	Common Agricultural Policy Electronic Dictionary (CAP-ED)
Policy area:	Agriculture and rural development
Further information:	http://ec.europa.eu/idabc/en/document/2073/5926.html
Description:	<p>Within the framework of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), large amounts of related data have to be transferred between DG Agriculture and the Member State administrations. These are based on several diverse codes (ISO countries, budget codes, product codes, currencies, etc) and are transmitted by using a variety of different formats (electronic files, faxes and e-mails).</p> <p>The primary objective of the CAP-ED extranet is to simplify and facilitate electronic data exchanges between CAP actors. It provides the common repository/dictionary containing up-to-date code lists and data structures alongside multilingual explanations of all terms.</p>

Name:	Common Agricultural Policy-Improved Data & Indicators (CAP-IDIM)
Policy area:	Agriculture and rural development
Further information:	http://ec.europa.eu/idabc/en/document/5358/5963.html
Description:	<p>The CAP-IDIM system is a web-based common repository and management tool to facilitate transfer, storage and processing of the rural development monitoring data submitted by the national and regional authorities across the Member States. This tool assists the European Commission and the Member States in monitoring rural development programmes.</p>

Name:	Agricultural Market Information System (AMIS) quota
Policy area:	Agriculture and rural development
Further information:	http://ec.europa.eu/idabc/en/document/5357/5963.html
Description:	<p>The AMIS quota system consists of a set of web modules connected to a central database. The system supports the exchange of information between the Member States and the Directorate General for Agriculture (DG AGRI) in aid of managing agricultural quotas. The system also allows dissemination of public information on quotas via the Europa website.</p>

Name:	Trade Control and Expert System (TRACES)
Policy area:	Health & Consumer Protection
Website:	http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/diseases/traces/index_en.htm
Description:	<p>TRACES) is an integrated web-based veterinary system for facilitating traceability of live animals. Through TRACES, information between all related national and Community authorities is coordinated to provide rapid reaction in case of animal diseases outbreaks. The TRACES system was established by the Commission Decision 2004/292/EC of 30 March 2004 and is maintained by the Directorate General for Health and Consumers.</p>

Name:	VAT Information Exchange System (VIES) - Administrations
Policy area:	Taxation
Further information:	http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/taxation/vat/traders/vat_number/index_en.htm
Description:	With the completion of the Single Market on 1 January 1993, fiscal customs based controls at internal frontiers were abolished and a new VAT control system was put in place for intra-Community trade. The most significant benefit was the reduction of the administrative burden on companies, with the elimination of some 60 million customs documents per year. The computerised VIES manages the flow of data held across national VAT administrations, while enabling them to monitor and control the flow of intra-Community trade and to detect all kinds of irregularities.

Name:	SFC2007-System for Fund Management in the European Community 2007-2013
Website:	Access limited to authenticated users
Description:	The SFC2007 provides a platform for the management of the Structural Funds for 2007-2013. Thanks to the development of this tool and to the re-engineering of the underlying business processes and back-office systems (for example the Rural Development Fund), the Commission is now able to pay beneficiaries within 60 days in more than 95 % of all cases.

Name:	SIMAP - Information system for European public procurement
Website:	http://simap.europa.eu/
Description:	<p>The SIMAP portal contains EU-wide information on public procurement opportunities, including a collection of standard forms, access to national procurement databases, sections covering relevant legislation and useful links, as well as information on relevant codes and nomenclatures.</p> <p>These include the Common Procurement Vocabulary (CPV), a single classification system for public procurement aimed at standardising all references used by contracting authorities and entities to describe the subject of procurement contracts.</p> <p>Moreover, the eNotices section of the portal includes an online tool for preparing public procurement notices and publishing them in the Supplement to the Official Journal of the European Union. The portal is managed by the Publications Office of the European Union.</p>

Name:	Internal Market Information System (IMI)
Website:	http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/imi-net/
Description:	<p>The IMI system is an electronic tool for multilingual, fast and secure exchange of information to enable day-to-day cooperation in the implementation of the internal market among the Member States. Relevant legislation includes the revised Professional Qualifications Directive (2005/36/EC) and the Services Directive (2006/123/EC).</p> <p>IMI comprises a number of horizontal applications to support a range of internal market legislation and vertical applications to support specific pieces of legislation. The other main component of IMI is a database of pre-translated question sets, related to mutual assistance provisions of the relevant legislation. More information is available at: http://epractice.eu/en/cases/imi.</p>

Name:	Common Emergency Communication and Information System (CECIS)
Further information	http://ec.europa.eu/echo/civil_protection/civil/cecis.htm
Description:	<p>The CECIS aims to protect citizens from natural and technical disasters and other hazards by interconnecting relevant authorities at European level. CECIS relies on the 'STESTA', the European Union's secure Trans European Services for Telematics between Administrations network to facilitate the exchange of information and experience among the bodies responsible for civil protection and maritime pollution prevention.</p> <p>The end-users of the CECIS system are the Monitoring and Information Centre (MIC) and the National Contact Points (NCPs). The MIC is governed by the Civil Protection Unit of DG Environment and is available on a 24-hour basis. In case of a disaster, the MIC acts as a communication hub at headquarters level among participating states, the affected country and the dispatched field experts.</p>

Name:	Excise Movement and Control System (EMCS)
Further information:	http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/taxation/excise_duties/circulation_control/index_en.htm
Description:	<p>The EMCS system became operational on 1 April 2010. It is a computerised platform for recording in real-time the movement of products for which excise duties are still due. Under EU legislation, excise duties on alcohol, tobacco and energy products must be paid at the final point before consumption. Upon reception of the goods, the consignee, or another actor on their behalf, submits an electronic 'report of receipt'.</p> <p>With approx. 100 000 traders dispatching around 4.5 million consignments of excise goods among the Member States each year, the EMCS has as a primary goal to reduce the financial and administrative burden they face. After 1 January 2011, the EMCS has become fully operational throughout the EU and is expected to reach more than 80 000 users.</p>

eGovernment Services for Citizens

Availability of eServices for Citizens

Name:	EUROPA - web portal
Website:	http://europa.eu/index_en.htm
Description:	<p>EUROPA, the web portal of the European Union, was launched in February 1995 on the occasion of the G7 ministerial meeting on the Information Society in Brussels. The portal includes basic information on how the EU works, latest EU news and events, as well as links to the websites of EU institutions and agencies. The site is run by the Communication department of the European Commission on behalf of the EU institutions.</p> <p>The EUROPA portal is designed to be as user-friendly as possible in line with the EU Institutions' commitment to openness and is compliant with the guidelines of the Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI, level 1).</p>

Name:	European Employment Services (EURES)
Website:	http://ec.europa.eu/eures/home.jsp?lang=en
Description:	<p>The Eures Employment Services (EURES) is a cooperation network coordinated by the European Commission. The network is designed to facilitate the free movement of workers within the European Economic Area; Switzerland is also involved. Partners in the network include public employment services, trade union and employers' organisations.</p> <p>The network is complemented by the European Job Mobility Portal, which offers jobseekers powerful search functionalities on Europe-wide job vacancies in 31 European countries. In addition, jobseekers can also create their CV online allowing potential employers to search for suitable candidates.</p>

Name:	EU Social Security Coordination
Website:	http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=849
Description:	<p>The rules on social security coordination do not replace national systems with a single European one. The Member States are free to decide who is to be insured under their legislation, which benefits are granted and under what conditions. The EU provides common rules to protect social security rights when moving within Europe (EU-27, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland). The site provides information on the common rules, and easy access to EU and national information on the social security rights and obligations of citizens on the move in Europe, and consolidates national and European information sources.</p>

Name:	Health-EU Portal
Website:	http://ec.europa.eu/health-eu/index_en.htm
Description:	<p>The Health-EU Portal is the official public health portal of the European Union, resulting from the Community Public Health Programme 2003-2008. The portal aims to help meet EU objectives in public health and provides a wide range of information and data on health-related issues and activities at both European and international levels. The target audience comprises both citizens who want to be informed on issues affecting their health, and health professionals, administrations, policy makers and stakeholders.</p> <p>Health-EU has received a certificate of compliance for 2011-13 with the code of conduct HON code, awarded by the Health On the Net (HON) foundation based in Geneva.</p>

Name:	PreLex
Website:	http://ec.europa.eu/prelex/apcnet.cfm?CL=en
Description:	<p>PreLex is a database of inter-institutional procedures, aiming to facilitate monitoring of the decision-making process between the Commission and other institutions. The database follows all official documents (proposals, recommendations and communications) transmitted by the Commission to the legislator (the Council and the Parliament) and to other institutions and bodies. The database allows for easy access of relevant electronic documents available on Commission sites, such Rapid, or external sites, such as EUR-Lex, the European Parliament's site and the Site of the European Economic and Social Committee. Information stored in the database has covered the period since 1976 and is updated on a daily basis.</p>

Name:	Europass
Website:	http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/
Description:	<p>The Europass service, provided through a network of national centres and an internet portal, offers useful information and an interactive tool to create the Europass CV and the Europass Language Passport with the help of online tutorials and guidelines. The service is available in 26 languages.</p> <p>Europass is completed by three additional documents (Europass Certificate Supplement, Europass Diploma Supplement and Europass Mobility) filled in and issued by the competent authorities.</p>

Name:	Your Voice in Europe
Website:	http://ec.europa.eu/yourvoice/
Description:	The 'Your Voice in Europe' portal was launched in October 2001 as part of the Interactive Policy Making initiative (IPM). The website targets both businesses and citizens (and in particular consumers), showing them how they can be actively involved in the Commission's policy making process . The users can present their views on new initiatives, discuss the future of Europe, provide feedback on how existing rules are applied, and even lodge complaints. The portal was designed using the Online Consultation Mechanism tool of the Online Questionnaire Management System of IPM.

Name:	EUR-Lex
Website:	http://eur-lex.europa.eu/
Description:	The EUR-Lex portal is a free and multilingual gateway to Community legislation online , offering comprehensive access to European law. Available online sources include the Official Journal of the European Union, the Treaties and the legislation in force; the document series of the European Commission; the case-laws of the Court of Justice and the Court of First Instance; and the collection of consolidated legislation. It also provides links to other sources of information, such as the registers of the institutions and other legislative sites of the EU and the Member States. EUR-Lex offers sophisticated search facilities providing in-depth documentary and legal analysis.

Name:	Your Europe - Citizens
Website:	http://ec.europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/index_en.htm
Description:	<p>'Your Europe' was launched on 17 February 2005. It is a multilingual public information service portal for citizens and enterprises intending to carry out cross-border activities within the European Union.</p> <p>With respect to citizens, the portal provides information on their rights and opportunities in the EU and the internal market, as well as advice on how to exercise these rights in practice. A variety of thematic areas is covered, such as moving to a new country, information on schooling, social security and finding employment. The broad spectrum of information is complemented by a selection of useful links to external sources, as well as access to the Your Europe Advice and SOLVIT services in support of both citizens and enterprises.</p>

Name: SOLVIT-Citizens (Solving problems on misapplication of Community Law)

Website: <http://ec.europa.eu/solvit/>

Description: SOLVIT is an online **problem solving network** in which EU Member States work together to solve problems caused by the misapplication of the Internal Market law by public authorities without resort to legal proceedings. There is a SOLVIT centre in every European Union Member State (as well as in Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein). SOLVIT Centres handle complaints from citizens and businesses and are committed to providing real solutions to problems within ten weeks. Using SOLVIT is free of charge.

SOLVIT has been operating since July 2002. The European Commission coordinates the network, provides database facilities and, when needed, helps speed up the resolution of problems. Related cases may be submitted by e-mail, post or fax, but also online by using the [relevant submission service](#).

Name: ePractice.eu

Website: <http://epractice.eu>

Description: The [ePractice.eu](#) portal is an initiative of the [European Commission](#). Designed as a **Web 2.0 community service**, it is tailored to the needs of eGovernment, eInclusion and eHealth practitioners. ePractice members may exchange experiences and views, publish [cases](#) concerning their own projects and share news, events, publications, best practices and lessons learnt.

Knowledge and expertise repositories can be found in the ePractice Library and News sections. Communication is built around ePractice [Communities](#), where peers can meet either physically via [workshops](#), or virtually via blogs. Members are regularly kept up-to-date by the ePractice [Newsletter](#) subscription service, the eGovernment [Factsheets](#) for 34 European countries and the [Events](#) section. In addition, [ePractice.eu TV](#) offers interviews and presentations on eGovernment, eInclusion and eHealth.

Name: Joinup

Website: <https://joinup.ec.europa.eu>

Description: The 'Joinup' portal promotes sharing and reuse of Open Source Software (OSS), semantic assets, and other interoperability solutions. The platform is designed to provide state-of-the-art communication, network and collaboration tools to public administrations, policymakers, developers and experts involved in the interoperability of public information systems.

Since December 2011, the portal has incorporated the previous **OSOR.eu** portal on OSS solutions for public administrations and the Semantic Interoperability Centre Europe portal, **SEMIC.eu**, a collaborative service with a repository of assets for semantic interoperability in Europe.

'Joinup' is the result of an action of the '[Interoperability Solutions for European Public Administrations](#)' (ISA) programme.

Name:	PLOTEUS-Portal on Learning Opportunities throughout the European Space
Website:	http://ec.europa.eu/ploteus
Description:	<p>The objective of PLOTEUS is to facilitate access to information on learning opportunities in EU, EFTA and candidate countries, with a special view to supporting mobility throughout Europe for education and training purposes. Students, job seekers, workers, parents, teachers and guidance counsellors can find information on learning opportunities, such as university studies, vocational education and training at European, national and regional levels.</p> <p>The current version of the portal allows direct queries on the content of national databases and offers direct answers to specific queries about single courses. 'Ploteus' is now maintained under the Lifelong learning programme supervised by the Directorate-General for Education and Culture (DG EAC).</p>

eGovernment Services for Businesses

Availability of eServices for Businesses

Name:	Enterprise Europe Network
Website:	http://www.enterprise-europe-network.ec.europa.eu/index_en.htm
Description:	<p>Established as part of the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP), the network includes approx. 600 partner organisations in more than 40 countries. It offers comprehensive support and practical advice on EU legislation, and on finding business and funding opportunities. Main target is to support small and medium enterprises (SMEs), even though availability extends to all businesses, research centres and universities across Europe.</p> <p>The network also supports development of the research and innovation capacities of SMEs via its business and technology cooperation database, which provides information on tender opportunities, international networking, and partners' search facilities.</p>

Name:	Your Europe - Businesses
Website:	http://ec.europa.eu/youreurope/business/index_en.htm
Description:	<p>'Your Europe' was launched on 17 February 2005. It is a multilingual public information service portal for citizens and enterprises intending to carry out cross-border activities within the European Union.</p> <p>The portal covers a variety of subjects concerning businesses, such as, registration of companies, public procurement, taxes, business directories, and various funding opportunities or employment laws. EU-wide and country specific information pages also contain useful links to external sources, as well as access to the Your Europe Advice and SOLVIT services in support of both citizens and enterprises.</p>

Name:	SOLVIT–Businesses (Solving problems on misapplication of Community Law)
Website:	http://ec.europa.eu/solvit/
Description:	<p>Beyond citizen-oriented services, the online problem-solving network SOLVIT also provides solutions to businesses, addressing a variety of issues such as dealing with administrative obstacles, unjustified refusal of access to a national market, or problems in receiving reimbursement of VAT.</p>

Name: NCTS New Computerised Transit system

Further information: http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/customs

Description: The [New Computerised Transit System](#) (NCTS) supports customs transit operations among the Member States. It is an **IT tool to manage and control** the transit system by enabling traders to submit electronically what is known as 'Community/Common Transit declarations'.

The system is based on advanced IT systems and electronic processing of data. It aims to increase the efficiency and the effectiveness of transit procedures, to improve prevention and detection of fraud, and to accelerate transactions carried out under a transit procedure, while offering the necessary security.

Name: VAT Information Exchange System (VIES) - Businesses

Further information: http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/taxation/vat/

Description: With the completion of the Single Market, on 1 January 1993, fiscal customs based controls at internal frontiers were abolished and a new VAT control system was put in place for intra-Community trade. The most significant benefit was the reduction of the administrative burden on companies with the elimination of some 60 million customs documents per year. The computerised VIES manages the flow of the data held across national VAT administrations, while enabling them to monitor and control the flow of intra-Community trade and to detect all kinds of irregularities.

The system enables enterprises to obtain rapid confirmation of the VAT numbers of their trading partners. In addition, the European Commission maintains an [Online VAT Validation Service](#), which allows any member of the public to access parts of the VIES system and obtain confirmation on the validity of VAT identification numbers.

Name: TED-Tenders Electronic Daily

Further information: <http://ted.europa.eu>

Description: The TED-Tenders Electronic Daily service is an **online database** of the [Publications Office](#) of the European Union, which contains details of all public procurement invitations to tender published in the Supplement to the Official Journal of the European Union (S series, Official Journal S or OJ S).

The database holds information on public tenders above some specific contract values and is updated five times a week with approximately 1 500 public procurement notices from the European Union, the European Economic Area and beyond. It provides facilities for browsing, searching and sorting procurement notices by country, region, business sector and more. Information about each and every procurement document is published in all of the 23 official EU languages. Access to the database is free of charge.

Name: **European Customs Information portal**

Further information: <http://ec.europa.eu/ecip/>

Description: The first phase of the European Customs Information portal was launched on 31 March 2010 as a single point of access to relevant and practical information (including special animated scenarios) on each step of the procedures pertaining to **import, export** and **transit activities**.

The present version also outlines the legal framework and includes policy information, databases and assistance services taken from European Commission sources and EU Member States' customs websites through RSS feeds. Emphasis is placed on the application of the Safety and Security Amendment to the Customs Code, which entered into force on 1 July 2009.

The portal was developed by the European Commission together with the Member States and the Trade Contact Group.

Name: **Open e-PRIOR electronic procurement platform**

Further information: <https://joinup.ec.europa.eu/software/openeprior/description>

Description: 'Open e-PRIOR' is an open-source eProcurement platform, developed under the ISA programme, by DG Informatics (DIGIT). It was deployed within DIGIT in 2009. The platform plays the role of an intermediary between back office applications of a public administration and the Pan-European Public Procurement OnLine ([PEPPOL](#)) interoperability platform. It is connected to PEPPOL via its own Access Point, facilitating the cross-border exchange of eProcurement documents between, for example, a public administration in country A with suppliers in country B.

'Open e-PRIOR' currently covers post-award eProcurement; releases by 2012 will add features such as eInvoicing through a supplier portal, eFulfilment (electronic delivery note and goods receipt) and ePayment.

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 European Commission factsheet is updated once a year.

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

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