

[eGovernment in]

Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia



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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 Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. 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): 2 052.7 inhabitants (2010)

GDP at market prices: 6 702.4 million Euros (2009)

GDP per inhabitant in PPS (Purchasing Power Standards, EU-27=100): 35.0 (2010)

GDP growth rate: -0.9 % (2009)

Inflation rate: 3.2 % (2006)*

Unemployment rate: 36 % (2006)*

Government debt/GDP: 34 % (2006)*

Public balance (government deficit or surplus/GDP): -0.6 % (2006)*

*Source: [Europa website](#)

Source: [Eurostat](#)

Area: 25 433 km²

Capital city: Skopje

Official language: Macedonian*

Currency: Denar

*Source: [Constitution of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia](#)

Source: [Europa website](#)

Political Structure

The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia became independent in 1991 as part of the break up of Yugoslavia. It is a **parliamentary democracy** with an executive Government composed of a coalition of parties from the unicameral legislature (*Собрание, Sобрание*). The Assembly comprises 120 members elected every four years.

The role of the [President of the Republic](#) is mostly ceremonial, with the real power resting in the hands of the President of the [Government](#). The President of the Republic is the Commander-in-Chief of the State's armed forces and the President of the State Security Council. S/he is elected every five years and can be elected twice, at most.

With the passage of a new law and elections held in 2005, local government functions were divided into 85 self-government units. Each such unit constitutes a single municipality, with the exception of the self-government unit of the capital 'City of Skopje', which encompasses 10 municipalities. Neighbouring municipalities may establish cooperative arrangements.

Judiciary power is exercised by courts; the court system is headed by the Judicial Supreme Court, Constitutional Court and the Republican Judicial Council. The Assembly appoints the judges.

The country's main political divergence is between the largely ethnically-based political parties representing the country's two ethnic communities. The issue of power balance between the two communities led to a brief war in 2001, which ended in the same year, when both parties reached a

power-sharing agreement. In August 2004, the Republic's parliament passed legislation redrawing local boundaries and giving greater local autonomy to ethnic Albanians in areas where they predominate.

Head of State: President of the Republic [Gjorge Ivanov](#) (since April 2009).

Head of Government: President of the Government [Nikola Gruevski](#) (since August 2006).

Information Society Indicators

Percentage of households with Internet access: 46 % (2010)

Percentage of enterprises with Internet access: 84 % (2010)

Percentage of individuals using the Internet at least once a week: 50 % (2010)

Percentage of households with a broadband connection: 37 % (2010)

Percentage of enterprises with a broadband connection: 77 % (2010)

Percentage of individuals having purchased/ordered online in the last three months: 2 % (2010)

Percentage of enterprises having received orders online within the previous year: N/A

Percentage of individuals using the Internet for interacting with public authorities: obtaining information 10.2 %, downloading forms 3.6 %, returning filled forms 2 % (2010)

Percentage of enterprises using the Internet for interacting with public authorities: obtaining information N/A, downloading forms N/A, returning filled forms N/A

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

July 2011

A new service which enables the payment of administrative fees by mobile phone is [launched](#) in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia on 5 July 2011. The new method of payment is quick and easy and can be used by any citizen or student for the charges made by public offices and universities for various services. It involves an application which enables leading smart phones to **effect payment** in just three steps. The [School of Information Science and Computer Engineering](#) is the first faculty to use this new method of payment. In the future, it will be integrated with all student services that involve administrative fees.

Ivo Ivanovski, Minister of Information Society and Administration, was present at the launch of the new service, which took place at the [Faculty of Technology and Metallurgy - Skopje](#). He urged institutions and universities to apply to the [Ministry for Information Society and Administration](#) to obtain a username and password, and to train the relevant staff to work with the new system and be able to check whether a transaction is successful.

March 2011

- ▶ During March 2011, four public meetings are [organised](#) in cities of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia aiming at promoting and discussing the draft National Policy for **Open Software**, by involving the public in the process of finalisation of the text. At the same time, the events mark the last stage of the project for the adoption of this policy.

The events have taken place in the cities of *Tetovo*, *Štip*, *Skopje* and *Bitola*. Main presenters included representatives of the non-profit organisation promoting Open Software ([Слободен софтвер Македонија](#)) in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the Metamorphosis Foundation and the Ministry of Information Society and Administration.

The public events format was chosen to introduce the reasons behind the adoption of this policy. During the presentations, the implementation of the '[Computer for every child](#)' project was described as a good example upon which the future policy should be built; the project's weak points were also addressed, so as to implement better projects in the future. Moreover, all the recommendations contained in the policy document were explained.

- ▶ On 28 March 2011, it is announced that the second phase of the [Single Window system](#) has been [completed](#). This enables the electronic registration of a business in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia using a computer and credit card service, without the need for a physical presence in the **Central Registry**. Nikola Gruevski, the Prime Minister of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, was present at the commissioning of the Single Window system at the regional office of the Central Registry in *Štip*, a city in the east of the country.

He said that his country "has become the leading country in Europe in terms of establishing a business. In the latest report 'Doing Business', it was ranked first in Europe in the category 'Conditions for Opening Business', and the Central Registry is among the top ten in several other categories. These results are neither gifts nor achieved overnight, but the fruit of hard work and a strong desire to improve the economic situation and provide a better quality of life for all citizens."

February 2011

The [Ministry of Information Society and Administration](#) of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the government of the United Kingdom [sign](#) a **memorandum of cooperation** on the project 'Support for the process of modernisation of the state administration'. The cooperation comprises a workshop held for professionals in the ministry, training at the British National School of Administration and visits by UK experts to offer their support in the public administration reform process.

News 2010-2001

2010

- ▶ On *1 December 2010*, the 6th international conference '[e-Society.Mk](#)' on 'eGovernment for Increased Efficiency and Transparency' is held in Skopje. The conference addresses the role of eGovernment systems in increasing efficiency and **transparency** of the **public administration**. An important event at the conference is the promotion of the book '[Fundamentals and Development of eGovernment](#)', published by the [eGov Project](#), the [Ministry of Information Society and Administration](#) and the [Metamorphosis Foundation](#). The book is also available in English.
- ▶ On *5 November 2010*, the new [Ministry of Information Society and Administration](#) is **established**, following a government decision. The new ministry encompasses the **Agency for Civil Servants**, a part of the General Secretariat managing policies aimed at civil servants, a part of the Ministry of Justice and the Secretariat of European Affairs. The creation of the new organisation is in response to the recommendation by [SIGMA](#) - a joint initiative of the EU and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), which supports the public administration reform process in various countries.
- ▶ In *May 2010*, the Real Estate Cadastre Agency [launches](#) the official operation of [Katactap](#), the electronic **land registry system** of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The service is currently only available for the city of Skopje, but it is expected to include the entire country in the future. The system will significantly increase the reliability of data and will provide more efficient services to citizens. The cost of the project amounted to approximately € 320 000, with funds provided by the budget of the agency.

During the same month, the Ministry of Information Society and the Real Estate Cadastre Agency announce that a pilot system to enable state institutions to receive **property certificates** electronically will be launched in the next three months. According to the plan, the agency is to be connected to 16 institutions via a secure electronic document exchange.

- ▶ On *21 April 2010*, the Ministries of Information Society and Education launch the web portal [e-ucebnici.mk](#), where digitally published books can be searched by department, title or author. Currently about 60 books have been **published electronically**; in the future, the portal will be supplemented by new content. The project aims to improve the educational system of the country as electronic books can become an alternative to printed textbooks.
- ▶ On *23 February 2010*, the '[Electronic Gradebook](#)' project is **launched** at the '*Kole Nedelkovski*' primary school of the *Centar* municipality of Skopje. The 'Electronic Gradebook' is a student information system that allows parents to **monitor online** the **grades**, the educational progress and other information related to school activities of their children. The website of the *Centar* municipality hosts the link to the 'Electronic Gradebook'.

On *10 February 2010*, representatives of the '[eGov Project](#)' and the Public Procurement Bureau of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia [announce](#) the launch of a new system that integrates the [eProcurement system](#) (EPPS) with a software solution for publishing contract notices and notifications. Developed by the **Public Procurement Bureau**, the integrated software creates a one-stop-shop for public procurement in the country, which improves efficiency and transparency. The new system is compliant with the European Union Directives and supports all forms of public

procurement, including electronic auctions. The latter have resulted in savings of approximately € 1.2 million in 2009 for the government.

- ▶ In *January 2010*, a contract for the development of Internet kiosks is [signed](#) between the Minister of Information Society and a group of private companies. The kiosks will allow **wireless Internet** connection within a radius of 250 metres and operate in rural areas close to schools. By June 2010, three private operators will have installed 680 such Internet kiosks in rural areas across the country.

On *21 January 2010*, the Ministry of Information Society and an IT provider [sign](#) an agreement to speed up and enhance the efficiency of the exchange of data between government institutions and public bodies. During its pilot phase, the project is to be implemented in five state institutions, namely the Customs Administration, the Ministry of the Interior, the Central Registry, and the Tax Administration.

2009

- ▶ In *August 2009*, a **new portal** for the **disabled** entitled 'I want, I know, I can' is launched by the Ministers of Information Society and Labour and Social Policy. The objective of the portal is to act as a common point of reference for those who are disabled. The portal offers a news service, a space for complaints and questions as well as information on the rights, opportunities and the services offered by state institutions.
- ▶ On *29 July 2009*, the operation and maintenance of the automated system for the management of international **cargo transport licenses** is [undertaken](#) by the Ministry of Transport and Communications, after the successful completion of the relevant project, jointly implemented by the ministry and the [eGov Project](#). The system is expected to reduce the administrative burden on truckers and to increase transparency.

During the same month, a **framework** for future assistance activities is [drawn](#) in a **Memorandum of Understanding** and Cooperation signed on *2 July 2009* between the [eGov Project](#) and the Ministry of Information Society. Assistance will include but will not be limited to the following areas: training, on-the-job mentoring, preparation of strategic documents, and strengthening of the coordinating role of the ministry with regard to ICT policy development. The main goal is to provide the ministry with the experience and expertise accumulated via the eGov Project and to increase its capacity.

- ▶ In *April 2009*, the Ministry of Information Society announces that the newly established National Council for the Information Society Council [held](#) its first constitutive session on 18 March 2009. The official press release states that the new body aims "to **improve IT conditions** in the country". The council is an independent body comprised of representatives of state institutions, the private sector and civil society; all participating in the development of the Information Society.

2008

- ▶ On *22 December 2008*, [EXIM](#), an online application system for export/import licences and quotas, is officially [launched](#). The project is coordinated by the customs administration, with technical assistance provided by the [USAID](#), and is funded by the [eGov Project](#). EXIM will enable national companies involved in foreign trade to electronically apply and obtain import, export and transit licences from fifteen government institutions involved in foreign trade regulation. This application is part of the Trade Facilitation Single Window initiative implemented by the government.
- ▶ In *July 2008*, the number of economic operators (vendors) registered with the new [eProcurement system](#), having access to tenders published online, grows from 250 to 610 over one month.
- ▶ In *April 2008*, the municipality of *Berovo* receives an award for having successfully completed the public procurement process via the new [eProcurement system](#). The object of the procurement was construction work for a public square. The entire process, including evaluation of the bids, was completed within a few hours.

- ▶ In *February 2008*, during a press conference, the Minister in charge of Information Society invites all public institutions and businesses to register with the new [eProcurement system](#) and to obtain digital certificates, which are compulsory when submitting a tender. The eProcurement system was developed by the Public Procurement Bureau, with the support of the [eGov Project](#).
- ▶ The new [Law on Public Procurement](#) is adopted on *1 January 2008* by the Assembly. It aims to enhance the integrity of the Government's purchasing decisions while increasing transparency in tendering procedures. Among other provisions, it regulates the use of **electronic means** at various stages of the procurement process, such as eNoticing, eTendering, eCommunications, eAuctions and contract award via electronic means.

2007

- ▶ In *December 2007*, the operation of the **electronic tax service 'e-Tax'** for corporate tax, administered by the Public Revenue Office, reaches a registration level of 90 % and a monthly online submission rate of 70 %. The service, which includes digital signatures, was developed under the [eGov Project](#).
- ▶ On the occasion of the 3rd international conference '**e-Society.Mk**', held on *29-30 November 2007* in Skopje, the document 'Recommendations for ICT Standards in the State Administration' along with a set of recommended policies for achieving interoperability are presented to the public. The benefits expected from the implementation of these recommendations include: increased efficiency and effectiveness; strengthened inter/intra-communication among national public bodies, etc.
- ▶ In *April 2007*, the FYROM becomes one of the first non-EU countries to [equip](#) its population with travel documents featuring digitalised signatures and biometric data. **ePassport applications** from citizens are to be handled by 45 data stations in 30 registration offices in the country. Passport booklets come equipped with a 72KB microchip containing security features which comply with the EU and the [ICAO](#) (International Civil Aviation Organisation) guidelines.

2006

- ▶ In *May 2006*, the Education Web Portal is [launched](#), aiming to enable the exchange of experience and the sharing of resources and teaching methods among teachers, parents and students throughout the country. The initiative is a project of the [Ministry of Education and Science](#) ('Connects' and the 'eSchool.mk' projects). The portal will allow schools to create and link their own websites, as well as allocate email accounts to all teachers and students.
- ▶ In *March 2006*, a pilot **electronic procurement system** for the City of Skopje and the surrounding areas [goes online](#). The ultimate aim is the expansion towards a fully functional IT-based procurement system on a national scale. The system was developed by the [eGov Project](#), and the national Public Procurement Bureau. It provides a secure system of information on Government contracts for potential suppliers of goods and services accompanied by bidding facilities.
- ▶ In *February 2006*, a local eGovernance project is launched in 34 municipalities across the country. The aim is to provide wireless Internet access implementing '[eLocal Governance](#)', thus enabling better policy outcomes, higher quality services and a greater engagement with citizens via ICT. Key components of the project are upgraded IT equipment, communication technology, basic office software and a web-based municipal management information system. A private Internet service provider company will deliver the equipment, carry out installation and provide Internet connectivity.
- ▶ In *January 2006*, the 'Apply-Online System for State Employment' is [launched](#) successfully. A few weeks after its launch, **electronic submissions** accounted for 74 % of all applications for positions in public administration. The new system was developed for the government by the [eGov Project](#) by paying particular attention to overcoming the barrier of limited Internet access.

2005

- ▶ In *December 2005*, the Government forms a strategic partnership with Microsoft to develop several **eGovernment services**. The services will initially be portal-oriented but are foreseen to become interactive and transaction-oriented. The services envisaged are:
 - www.uslugi.gov.mk: a standardised informational portal offering information to citizens concerning ministries and agencies;
 - an Internet presentation site for small and medium-sized enterprises;
 - an internal portal for the general secretariat of the government.
- ▶ Following adoption by the Information Society Task Force, the parliament approves the [National Strategy and Action Plan for Information Society Development](#) in *September 2005*. The document identifies the mechanisms and the legal and **fiscal frameworks** necessary for the implementation of eGovernment, education, eBusiness initiatives and ICT infrastructure development. The development of the document was supported by the [Foundation Open Society Institute](#), the Information Technology Commission and the [United Nations Development Programme](#) (UNDP).
- ▶ In *June 2005*, in line with the country's policy of alignment with the EU Data Protection Directive ([95/46/EC](#)) and particularly with Article 28, a [Directorate for Personal Data Protection](#) is established as an independent state body on the basis of the new law on Personal Data Protection of 25 January 2005.
- ▶ In *February 2005*, a new [Electronic Communications Law](#) is voted by the parliament. It aims to encourage competition in the telecommunications industry and sets measures to ensure quality services at affordable prices and to prevent monopoly conditions.
- ▶ In the course of *2005*, the government awards a contract regarding the provision of electronic passports, personal identity cards and driver's licences. The contractor will provide an integrated system for **personalisation of documents**. The project is set to last for 11 years and covers the delivery of 1.5 million passport documents with integrated microchips, 1.8 million personal identity cards and 500 000 driver's licences, as well as equipment for data acquisition, storage, processing and personalisation.

2002

- ▶ In *December 2002*, the **Commission for Information Technology**, charged with the elaboration of a National ICT Strategy and Action Plan, is established by the government.
- ▶ In *June 2002*, the [Law on Data in Electronic Form and Electronic Signature](#) and related bylaws on electronic operations that involve the use of ICT, as well as the use of electronic data and signatures in judicial, administrative and commercial transactional procedures, become operational. Both the application and implementation belong to the Ministry of Finance.

News 2000 and before

In *1999*, the [Metamorphosis Foundation](#) is established as an independent, non-partisan, non-profit organisation based in Skopje. Its main objective is the promotion of democracy and prosperity through the **knowledge-based economy** and the Information Society. The foundation is part of the ePublishing programme of the Foundation Open Society Institute. It became an independent foundation in 2004.

eGovernment Strategy

Main strategic objectives and principles



National Strategy for eGovernment (2010-2012)

The [National Strategy for eGovernment 2010-2012](#) incorporates the vision, goals and potential benefits associated with eGovernment. Following EU guidelines, it identifies the main stakeholders, the priorities and the measures needed to accelerate developments. Strategic measures proposed are classified in three directions,

namely projects (13), eServices (17) and initiatives (4).

In more detail, the Strategy focuses on the following **objectives**:

- ▶ better coordination of the public administration resulting in better provision of government services;
- ▶ improved interaction with business and the industry;
- ▶ participation of both citizens and the academic sector in building the Information Society;
- ▶ effective government management, by increasing the number of ICT experts and the level of ICT literacy in public administration;
- ▶ open, participatory and democratic government, reduced corruption, increased transparency;
- ▶ increased revenues and reduced costs.

The strategy document views eGovernment as having a much more important role than just supporting the operation of the public administration; it is a major factor for achieving sustainable development for society as a whole. FYROM's current eGovernment strategy is based upon a set of principles, which are explicitly stated in the relevant document. Accordingly, the strategy should:

- ▶ focus on citizens' needs, by being cost and time reducing and effective. It should, also, promote full-time availability and social inclusion;
- ▶ be developed under the premises of transparency, security and trust, while at the same time being user-friendly and simple in its processes;
- ▶ promote cooperation among the various government institutions, being based upon standardisation and interoperability;
- ▶ facilitate the participation of everyone in decision-making, thus enhancing eDemocracy.

Draft Public Administration Reform Strategy 2010-2015

Accompanying the aforementioned strategy for eGovernment, a [Draft Public Administration Reform Strategy, 2010-2015](#), was published on 21 December 2010, funded by the EuropeAid programme. The document contains extensive reference to current policy matters on eGovernment, which are summarised below.

First, the document focuses on the main problems and **barriers** affecting the current level of development of eGovernment. Some of those are related to the slow process of the computerisation process; inconsistencies among the existing pieces of legislation; the absence of a monitoring mechanism for the quality of the implemented eServices, as well as the absence of user centric and proactive portals; the low budget allocated to the implementation of eGovernment services; the small number of IT-trained civil service managers and project coordinators and the low level of specification of administrative processes and procedures, and of their interconnectivity with IT infrastructures.

Second, to tackle these **shortcomings**, the strategy document proposes three groups of **actions** phased from 2011 to 2015.

Actions envisaged by the end of **2011**:

- ▶ adoption of additional legislation and administrative frameworks on eGovernment, in coordination with the Law on Electronic Management;
- ▶ specification of administrative procedures and provisions for quality of service, followed by business re-engineering of processes to allow implementation of appropriate electronic solutions;
- ▶ further development of horizontal solutions, provided by the Ministry of Information Society and Administration for all public administration authorities;
- ▶ implementation of an electronic document management system applicable to all public administration;
- ▶ a fully operational one-stop information centre (portal & call centre) for citizens and businesses (dependent on budgetary restrictions).

Actions envisaged by the end of **2013**:

- ▶ introduction of online services for **businesses** (10 services according to the preferences of the business community), provided the relevant processes have been thoroughly streamlined;
- ▶ introduction of five high impact integrated online services for **citizens** (filing of application, payment, data integration, delivery of administrative decision/document), provided the relevant processes have been thoroughly streamlined;
- ▶ on-line services for administrative authorities to access and exchange data from registers instead of requesting users (citizens and businesses) to submit documents.

Actions envisaged by the end of **2015**:

- ▶ further implementation of proactive user-centric services, making intensive use of electronic documents;
- ▶ enlarged budget for the realisation of projects on eGovernment services, compatible with the European Interoperability Framework;
- ▶ awareness-raising on eGovernment services and training on a regular basis of qualified project managers and civil servants on the use of eGovernment;
- ▶ development and implementation of an interoperability framework for public administrations.

Previous eGovernment Strategies

eGov Project (2004-2011)

A key aid in the implementation of the country's eGovernment policy has been the [eGov Project](#), which was launched in 2004 and completed in March 2011; it played a major part facilitating the development of pilot IT applications of replicable models. The **strategic targets** served by the project included two main objectives. Objective 1 is related to coherent eGovernment policies to be adopted and implemented (like the creation of a strategic framework; data privacy and implementation capacity). Objective 2 is related to eGovernment policy implementation (building support for eGovernment among policy makers and implementers; creation of an eGovernment portal; implementation of standards and creation of applications; pilot service delivery projects).

National Strategy for the Development of Electronic Communications with IT (2007-2010)

The [National Strategy for the Development of Electronic Communications with Information Technologies](#) (NSDECIT) supports the development of Information Society via the creation of a communications infrastructure. This infrastructure (supply side) is viewed as a precondition for the introduction and massive use of all Information Society services (demand side, namely eGovernment, eEducation, eBusiness, eHealth, among other fields). Actions contained in the strategy document cover the period 2007 to 2010, but measurement of results achieved is to be made in 2012. The goal is that by that year, the most important ICT indicators should have attained a level corresponding to 90 % of the EU average. This progress will be monitored by the [National Council for the Information Society](#) in cooperation with the State Statistical Office. Among key actions envisaged by the strategy document, an analysis and recommendations eGovernment study of the interoperability of services at technical, semantic and organisational levels, is carried out according to international standards.

Government Programme (2006-2010)

In broader terms, FYROM's [Government Programme \(2006-2010\)](#) made specific references to IT and eSociety. It stressed that the basic preconditions for decreasing unemployment are related to economic revival, the entry of private domestic and foreign capital, as well as investments in a high quality and educated labour force. These can be achieved by improving the quality of IT education. Thus, the primary objective of the government is described as 'urgent and continuous investment in computer science and IT'. Targets of the Programme relevant to eGovernment are:

- ▶ connection of all border crossings into a centralised information system compatible with the EU applicable standards;
- ▶ implementation of an integrated medical information system and introduction of the eHealth card;
- ▶ computerised management of court files;
- ▶ computerisation of procedures for issuing personal ID documents;
- ▶ digitalisation of the land registry (cadastre) and application of Geographic Information Systems;
- ▶ promotion of non-cash payments, eTrade, eBanking and eGovernment.

National Strategy and Action Plan for Information Society Development (2005-2010)

The [National Strategy and Action Plan for Information Society Development](#), adopted by parliament in September 2005, is part of the broader National Information Society Policy. It has been the forerunner of the main policy targets, with special reference to information society and eGovernment, which were further elaborated in FYROM's [Government Programme \(2006-2010\)](#).

In fact, eGovernment, one of the seven pillars of the document, recognises that "the process of eGovernment introduction should be integrated with the process of public administration reform" and urges for the identification of "potential eGovernment implementation barriers on time, in order to promptly find the appropriate solutions."

According to the strategy, efficient and transparent government operations can provide better quality electronic services for citizens and the business-community serving the following **objectives**:

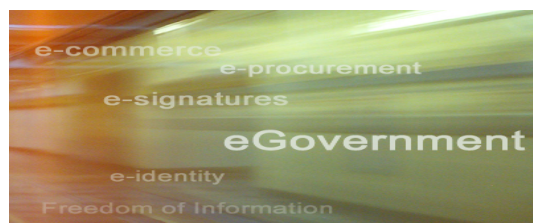
- ▶ participation of citizens in the building of the Information Society;
- ▶ satisfactory level of infrastructure to allow network connection of governmental institutions;
- ▶ creation of a legal and institutional framework for the development of the Information Society;
- ▶ online transactional eGovernment services, that encourage economic and social prosperity;

- ▶ a larger number of ICT experts and a higher level of ICT literacy in public administration.

In this light, a prioritised list of 41 projects was compiled, serving as the implementation target to be attained by 2010.

eGovernment Legal Framework

Main legal texts impacting on the development of eGovernment



eGovernment Legislation

Current status

There is currently no overall eGovernment legislation in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. A primary objective of the government is the adoption of legislation

which is in conformity with international conventions and in agreement with the relevant EU Directives. The country's ICT legislation framework focuses on the following key issues:

- ▶ de-monopolisation of the electronic communication services market and prevention of restrictions of competition;
- ▶ protection of intellectual property rights and data privacy, as well as security of information;
- ▶ protection from cybercrime;
- ▶ electronic business.

Freedom of Information Legislation

[Law on Free Access to Public Information](#) (2006)

Adopted on 25 January 2006, the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Character (Official Gazette No.13/06) entered into force on 1 September 2006. According to its provisions, any natural or legal entity is allowed to obtain information from State and municipal bodies, as well as from natural and legal entities performing public functions. The requests, which can be oral, written or electronic, must be responded to within 10 days. Several legal exemptions are provided for: classified and confidential information; personal data; tax violations; pending investigations; documents being compiled, in case their access causes misunderstanding; environmental protection; intellectual property protection. All these exemptions undergo a proportionality test balancing public interest against possible harm.

Data Protection/Privacy Legislation

[Law on Personal Data Protection](#) (2005, 2008)

Harmonisation of legislation in the area of personal data protection has been one of the government's priority activities since 2002. A new law on personal data protection, amended to include EC recommendations, was drafted in 2004, adopted on 25 January 2005 and modified to comply fully with the European Directive [95/46/EC](#) in 2008 (Official Gazette [no.7/2005](#) and [103/2008](#)). The law represents a '*lex generalis*' in the area of data protection in the country.

According to the law, **personal data** shall be: fairly and lawfully processed; collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes; processed in a manner which is consistent and proportionate with these purposes; accurate and complete; kept for no longer than the necessary timeframe for fulfilling the abovementioned purposes.

[Law on Electronic Management](#) (2009)

The Law on Electronic Management (Official Gazette, no.105, 21/08/2009), adopted on 21 August 2009, regulates the work of ministries and other government authorities in the exchange of data and documents in electronic format, in relation to the implementation of administrative services by electronic means. Seven bylaws were adopted in June 2010 to enable implementation, as well as that of electronic workflow procedures and electronic document exchanges. Those acts regulate issues such as environment and communication; certification of information systems; format and content of administrative services by electronic means such as electronic documents; standards and regulations for electronic communication; technical requirements; security of information systems; format and content of administration of data bases and others.

eSignatures Legislation

[Law on Data in Electronic Form and Electronic Signature](#) (2001)

The law of 2001 concerns electronic operations which involve the use of ICT, as well as that of electronic data and signatures in judicial, administrative and commercial transactional procedures. According to Article 13, "the generally accepted electronic signature with an authorised certificate related to the electronic data is equal to the personal signature, and therefore shall be **equally valid evidence** with the personal signature which is related to paper documents." However, this article further provides that "the electronic signature shall not be valid when a personal signature is required in writing before a public notary or a court."

The law was followed by 4 bylaws in 2001 and its actual use started in 2007 after the issuance of the fifth bylaw which regulates the institutions that can act as certification authorities (Official Gazette No.34/2001, 06/2002 and 98/2008). The entire body of legislation also regulates the process of using electronic messages such as like timestamps, system identifiers and others.

eCommerce Legislation

[Law on Electronic Commerce](#) (2007)

The Law on Electronic Commerce was adopted by parliament on 26 October 2007 (Official Gazette No.133/2007). The law regulates Information Society services related to electronic commerce and commercial communication along with the responsibilities of the providers of these services. It also enables electronic documents to be treated as official contracts and defines their legibility as paper documents. In addition, the Law outlines the form and validity of contracts in electronic form, setting that contracts shall be concluded by electronic means.

eCommunications Legislation

[Law on Electronic Communications](#) (2005, 2010)

The Law on Electronic Communications was voted by parliament on 15 February 2005 ([Official Gazette No.13/2005](#)), thus replacing previous telecommunications laws (Official Gazette Nos.33/96, 17/98, 28/00, 04/02, 37/04). Further amendments to the law were made in 2007, 2008 and 2010.

The law aims to allow increased competition in the telecommunications industry, by setting the conditions to ensure quality services at affordable prices, while preventing monopoly tactics. It also regulates the use of the frequencies spectrum and encourages investment incentives, while providing regulatory instruments and procedures concerning security and data privacy.

Pursuant to this law, the [Agency for Electronic Communications](#) was established as an independent regulatory authority for electronic communications and commenced operations on 1 July 2005.

[Law on Interception of Communications](#) (2006)

The Law regulates the conditions and the procedure for interception of communications, the way of proceeding, keeping and using the received information and data with the application of this Law and the control of the legality of the interception of communications. The person whose communication was intercepted has the right to challenge the authenticity of the data collected and the legality of the procedure of interception of their communications, in a procedure determined by the Law on Criminal Procedure.

eProcurement Legislation

[Law on Public Procurement](#) (2007)

The new Law on Public Procurement (Official Gazette no. 136/2007) entered into force on 1 January 2008, replacing the previous legislation of 2004 and 2005, and instituting the [Public Procurement Bureau](#) as a body within the Ministry of Finance which continuously monitors the implementation of public procurement legislation. The law of 2007 was adopted by parliament in an effort to enhance the integrity of the government's purchasing decisions. It aims to increase transparency in tendering procedures, provide consistency with other legislation and strengthen the legal protection of bidders.

This law intends to place the national legislation on public procurement in compliance with the EU Directives on public procurement ([2004/17/EC](#) and [2004/18/EC](#)), including their eProcurement provisions. In this respect, the law regulates the use of electronic means at various stages of the procurement process (eNoticing, eTendering, etc.) via the new [Electronic System for Public Procurement](#) (ESPP), which was put in operation in January 2010.

Re-use of Public Sector Information (PSI)

[Law of Free Access to Public Information](#) (2006)

As mentioned previously, the law regulates the terms, methods and procedures for exercising the right to free access to information, which is in possession of state bodies, municipalities, public budget enterprises and legal and physical entities. Holders of information of public character are obliged to:

- ▶ provide public access to regulations, strategies and other documents within their scope of work;
- ▶ enable access to such information;
- ▶ appoint one or more official mediator persons for the implementation of the right to free access to information.

According to the law, each physical or legal entity can request access to this information, with the holder obliged to respond within 30 days from the submission of the request. The request can be refused for certain cases, in which the information:

- ▶ is classified or confidential;
- ▶ refers to commercial and other economic interests;
- ▶ is protected for being considered as personal data;
- ▶ would harm the environment, if disclosed.

eGovernment Actors

Main roles and responsibilities

National eGovernment

Policy/Strategy

[Ministry of Information Society and Administration](#)

The Ministry has responsibility, among other areas, for all issues pertaining to information technologies. The Ministry has recently (November 2010) given enhanced responsibilities in public administration; it is therefore responsible for policy and strategy in eGovernment.

[Commission for Information Technology](#)

Established under a 'Special Decision of the Government', among other 'Commissions of the Government' (sometimes referred to as 'Committees'), this body has the responsibility of drawing the country's strategy and policy for IT. In this respect, the Commission is the author of the National Information Society Policy, as well as the National Strategy and Action Plan for Information Society Development.

Information Society Task Force

The Information Society Task Force is an ad-hoc expert body consisting of over 40 ICT and Information Society experts with varying backgrounds (namely, government officers, business sector representatives, researchers), led by the Commission for Information Technology.

Coordination

[Ministry of Information Society and Administration](#)

The Cabinet of the Minister in charge of Information Society is responsible for the coordination of the measures deriving from the National Strategy and Action Plan for Information Society Development, as well as the National Strategy for the Development of Electronic Communications with Information Technologies. The Cabinet, more precisely, deals with the coordination of all activities aimed at developing the Information Society.

[National Council for the Information Society](#)

The National Council for the Information Society is a body established in 2009, which includes representatives from the public, the academia, the private and the non-governmental organisations sector. The Council, fundamentally, will have to coordinate and secure the participation of all stakeholders in the development of the information society, and in the same time support the Minister, competent for the development of the information society..

Implementation

[National Council for the Information Society](#)

To implement the measures mentioned in the National strategy for development of electronic communications with informatics technologies (NSDECIT), the Government created a new institution - the National Council for development of the Informatics Society - which is composed of representatives from the public, the private, and the academic and the non-governmental sector.

Government Ministries and Commissions

Government ministries and commissions are responsible for the implementation of departmental ICT and eGovernment projects.

Support

[Agency for Electronic Communications](#)

The Agency for Electronic Communications is established with the Law on Electronic Communications in 2005 as an independent regulatory body in the electronic communications markets. The Agency has directions to achieve the goals of a competitive market in which the conditions would be created for end users to use electronic communications services at best quality and prices. In order to follow such practices, the Agency has developed a clear strategy for market development and has defined a path that should be followed in the short and medium terms.

[eGov Project](#)

From 2004 to March 2011, when its mission was completed, the eGov Project supported the implementation of the country's eGovernment policy. In particular, the project provided technical and financial support for the development of pilot eGovernment applications of replicable models at national and local levels. In its final stages, the project worked in close cooperation with the Ministry of Information Society and Administration on the development of an eDocuments infrastructure, and on a series of training sessions for the civil service.

[Public Procurement Bureau](#)

The Public Procurement Bureau is an institution within the Ministry of Finance, operational since January 2005. The Bureau's responsibilities include drafting of public procurement legislation and monitoring of its implementation. The bureau reports to the government, maintains a publicly available registry of procedures and procurement notices and organises training sessions.

Audit/Assurance

[State Audit Office](#)

The State Audit Office (SAO) was established in 1997 by the parliament under the State Audit Law (SAL). Each year, the audits to be carried out by the SAO appear in the Annual Programme of the State Audit Office. The following entities are mandatorily included in each yearly audit: central government, local government units and funds, state-owned enterprises and political parties.

Data Protection

[Directorate for Personal Data Protection](#)

The establishment of this Directorate is the result of the Law on Personal Data Protection of 2005, which implements the Directive [95/46/EC](#) on Data Protection. The Directorate for Personal Data Protection became an independent state body on 22 June 2005. Among other functions, the directorate ensures the respect of personal data protection principles and assesses the legality of personal data processing. The Directorate produced during 2011 a draft strategy on the [Provision for Secrecy and Protection of Personal Data Processing](#) for the period 2011-2015.

Others

[Agency for Electronic Communications](#)

Pursuant to the Electronic Communications Law of 2005, the Agency for Electronic Communications has been established as an independent regulatory authority. The Agency commenced its operations on 1 July 2005. The Agency has directions to achieve the goals of a competitive market in which the conditions would be created for end users to use electronic communications services with best quality and prices.

Regional & Local eGovernment

Policy/Strategy

Central Government

Due to the small size of the country, all regional and local eGovernment activities lie with the central government and its previously mentioned actors.

Implementation

Central Government

Responsibility of the implementation of eGovernment lies with the central government and its previously mentioned actors.

Support

eGov Project

At local level, the [Accountability through Transparency](#) application, supported by the project, provides a channel for citizens to participate in and become informed of the discussions held and decisions made by their local government. The application is part of the inter-municipality administration and allows citizens and other interested parties to access documents, to ask queries on any local council member, to participate in forums, to post their opinions online and so on.

Audit/Assurance

State Audit Office

The State Audit Office (SAO) was established in 1997 by parliament under the State Audit Law (SAL). Local government units and funds are audited each year.

eGovernment Who's Who

Main eGovernment decision-makers and executives

Ministers responsible for eGovernment



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Email: contact_mis@mis.gov.mk
Source: <http://mio.gov.mk/>

eGovernment Infrastructure

Main eGovernment infrastructure components

Portal

['Uslugi.gov.mk': FYROM's eGovernment portal](#)

Uslugi.gov.mk has been established as the single point of access to information and services of the government. The portal is a result of the government's efforts to create a more efficient and transparent administration by presenting to the public all available services for both citizens and business entities.

The portal enables citizens and businesses to:

- ▶ reduce the time required to find information about government services;
- ▶ gain timely and easy access to information about changes in government services;
- ▶ reduce time for distributing information services;
- ▶ link to government institutions;
- ▶ establish procedures for simple modification of existing and introduction of new services.

The portal is based on a system with a scalable architecture that allows expanding the capacity when needed. In the next stages of development, the portal will upgrade so as to allow full two-way communication between citizens and government. The preparation, processing and publication of the portal's content is entirely decentralised and distributed throughout all government institutions.

Networks

[Government IT Network](#)

The IT Network is designed to be the backbone communications infrastructure that connects all departments in a secure and interoperable environment. The aim of this project is to make a solid infrastructure among all government institutions. At the end of October 2008, a fibre optic connection was established bringing about the following benefits:

- ▶ allow for a high degree of security in communication between institutions;
- ▶ facilitate communication between institutions;
- ▶ reduce call costs.

[Broadband Infrastructure Network](#)

By the end of 2011, broadband infrastructure network is scheduled to become as important as the existing road infrastructure. In cooperation with the telecommunications industry and the business community, it will support the construction of high-speed broadband, which will serve all citizens. Such networks should have sufficient capacity to duplicate their speed every 12 to 18 months.

[University IT Network](#)

This is a project to link FYROM's Academic and Research Network MARNet with regional networks. Recent attempts have provided a wireless network linking schools, based on the 'Macedonia Connects' project. This project is managed by the [Academy for Educational Development \(AED\)](#) and implemented

by **On.Net**, an independent national communications network. It was built in order to deliver broadband wireless Internet services to approximately 500 schools, educational institutions, businesses and citizens nationwide.

eIdentification/eAuthentication

Current status

The [eGov Project](#) addressed the issue of electronic signatures from several inter-related aspects: completion of the legal framework, organising trainings and undertaking promotional activities. The 'eGov Project' engaged a foreign consultant to work with the Commission on eSignatures of the Ministry of Finance. As a result of this engagement, the following were accomplished:

- ▶ Secondary legislation was drafted and adopted in 2006. Thus, the legal framework based on the [Law on Data in Electronic Form and Electronic Signature](#) was completed.
- ▶ Members of the Commission were trained and enabled to register and audit the Certification Authorities.

Following the enforcement of the **Law on Data in Electronic Form and Electronic Signature**, '[Makedonski Telekomunikaci](#)' and '[KIBS](#)' became the two registered issuers of digital certificates and eSignatures supported by a PKI infrastructure. They started offering their services in June 2006, under a licence by the [Ministry of Finance](#). Following a government awarded contract, an integrated system for the personalisation of documents has been in operation since 2006, issuing electronic passports, personal identity cards and driver's licences.

Digital Certificates

This project promotes the benefits of using digital certificates accredited by the Certificate Authority (CA) for all employers who have a legal obligation to report and pay taxes in order to allow electronic documents to submit to state institutions and minimise the need for physical presence at their offices. This will facilitate and promote the use of current and future electronic services such as: Electronic publication of social contributions and personal income tax, electronic tax returns, electronic publication of annual accounts, electronic banking, electronic procurement, etc.

eProcurement

eProcurement System

Supported by the [eGov Project](#), on 10 February 2010, the latest version of the [eProcurement system](#) (EPPS) was launched. The new system integrated a software solution for publishing contract notices and notifications, developed by the [Public Procurement Bureau](#). The new system is a one-stop-shop for public procurement in the country, which improves efficiency and transparency. It streamlines complex procedures and facilitates interaction between businesses and government institutions. It is also compliant with the European Union Directives and supports all forms of public procurement, including electronic auctions. As a result, approximately € 1.2 million government funds were saved in 2009. All public institutions and businesses can register through the system and obtain the obligatory digital certificates for posting tenders or sending bids. In January 2008, eAuctions became a part of it.

Other Infrastructure

'eGov Project' Pilot Services

Since its launch in 2004, the '[eGov Project](#)' has provided technical and financial support in the development of pilot eGovernment applications of replicable models at national and local levels. A brief description of some of these applications follows:

[Apply-Online System for State Employment](#)

The service was developed as an online system for applicants for jobs in the public sector. Since its initial launch, the [website](#) has become the most visited government site in the country. The obligatory testing of the candidates is accomplished online, thus eliminating the risks of human error.

[Accountability through Transparency](#)

At local level, the 'Accountability through Transparency' application provides a channel for citizens to participate in and become informed of the discussions held and decisions made by their local government. The application is part of the inter-municipality administration and allows citizens to access documents, to ask queries on any local council member, to participate in forums, to post their opinion online, among other services.

[eLearning - Free ICT Course for Citizens](#)

The eLearning course is free of charge and open to anyone interested. Users can learn about modern technologies, navigate through the Internet and find their way through the most frequently used office applications.

[Site Builder - Online System for Distributing State Benefits](#)

The Site Builder checks the validity of applications for benefits and creates a ranking list based on predetermined criteria. To date, the Site Builder has been used by the Ministry of Transport and Communications to allocate the known as 'social apartments' to citizens with low income, and also by the Ministry of Education and Science for the distribution of student dormitories and benefits via a compulsory online application.

[eBudgeting](#)

The system allows for the electronic preparation, monitoring and simulation of the budget of the State, in cooperation with the Ministry of Finance. It also provides for the secure online submission of annual budget requests towards the Ministry.

[Automated System for the Management of International Cargo Transport Licences \(CEMT\)](#)

The system provides truckers with an online application facility for international cargo transport licences and distributes the licences following an electronic bidding process. In 2007, 936 companies applied electronically to compete for a limited number of licences. The use of the online system has become compulsory ever since.

[Single window for Export/Import Licenses and Tariff Quotas \(EXIM\)](#)

[EXIM](#) is an online application system for export/import licences and quotas, launched in 2008. The project is coordinated by the customs administration, with technical assistance provided by the [eGov Project](#). EXIM enables national companies involved in foreign trade to electronically apply and obtain

import, export and transit licences from fifteen government institutions involved in foreign trade regulation. This application is part of the 'Trade Facilitation Single Window' initiative implemented by the government.

[Online Registration of Employment](#)

The application aims at radically reducing the administrative burden of businesses when meeting their obligations to register new or terminated employments, thus saving time for both employers and state institutions concerned. The automated system has been in operation since 2008.

Additional applications by the eGov Project can be found in the next chapter on services to citizens and businesses.

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:	Public Revenue Office, Ministry of Finance
Website:	N/A
Description:	The service is not yet available for individual citizens.

2. Job search services by labour offices

Responsibility:	Civil Servants Agency
Website:	http://prijava.ads.gov.mk
Description:	The service is only partial, as it involves the public sector exclusively. It was developed by the eGov Project in order to provide an online system for applicants for jobs in the public sector. The Apply-On-Line system accepts applications for jobs in the civil service and has reached a high level of usage.

3. Social security benefits

a. Unemployment benefits

Responsibility: N/A

Website: N/A

Description: The service is not available online at present.

b. Child allowances

Responsibility: N/A

Website: N/A

Description: The service is not available online at present.

c. Medical costs (reimbursement or direct settlement)

Responsibility: N/A

Website: N/A

Description: This service is not available online at present.

d. Student grants

Responsibility: Ministry of Education and Science

Website: <http://www.egov.org.mk/Default.aspx>

Description: This service allocates dormitories, loans and grants according to a student's performance. Its use online has become mandatory since 2007. The application is a version of the 'Site Builder' application for electronic, automated distribution of various state benefits, developed under the [eGov Project](#).

4. Personal documents: passport and driver's licence

a. Passport

Responsibility: Ministry of Internal Affairs

Website: <http://www.uslugi.gov.mk>

Description: The service provides information and forms to download.

b. Driver's licence

Responsibility: N/A

Website: N/A

Description: The service is not available online at present.

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

Responsibility:	N/A
Website:	N/A
Description:	The service is not available online at present.

6. Application for building permission

Responsibility:	Regional Government
Website:	N/A
Description:	The service is not available online at present.

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

Responsibility:	N/A
Website:	N/A
Description:	The service is not available online at present.

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

Responsibility:	N/A
Website:	N/A
Description:	The service is not available online at present.

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

Responsibility:	Ministry of Internal Affairs
Website:	www.uslugi.gov.mk
Description:	The service provides information and forms to download.

10. Enrolment in higher education/university

Responsibility:	N/A
Website:	N/A
Description:	The service is not available online at present.

11. Announcement of moving (change of address)

Responsibility:	N/A
Website:	N/A
Description:	The service is not available online at present.

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

Responsibility:	N/A
Website:	N/A
Description:	The service is not available online at present.

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: Pension and Disability Insurance Fund, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy
Website: <http://www.piom.com.mk>
Description: The service provides information, some forms to download and a call centre.

2. Corporate tax: declaration, notification

Responsibility: Public Revenue Office, Ministry of Finance
Website: <http://etax.ujp.gov.mk>
Description: The eTax service provides online submission and returns facilities for companies, using authentication by digital signatures. The application has been developed under the [eGov Project](#).

3. VAT: declaration, notification

Responsibility: Public Revenue Office, Ministry of Finance
Website: N/A
Description: The service is not available online at present.

4. Registration of a new company

Responsibility: Central Register

Website: <http://www.crm.com.mk>

Description: The Central Register provides forms which can be downloaded and submitted manually. It also publishes registered company information on its website.

5. Submission of data to statistical offices

Responsibility: N/A

Website: N/A

Description: The service is not available online at present.

6. Customs declarations

Responsibility: Customs Administration

Website: <http://exim.gov.mk>

Description: The Single Window for Export/Import licenses and tariff quotas system, (EXIM), built under the support of the [eGov Project](#), is a web-based portal through which businesses can submit requests and receive the necessary licenses for export, import and transit of goods. Unified requests for 66 different types of licenses can be filled in and submitted online, at any time and any place providing stable internet connection. To simplify and automate the process for submission of request electronically only once and from one location, two new software modules were introduced: module for automatic confirmation of paid administrative fees (which means that there is no need for the submission of the original receipt), and module for digital signing.

7. Environment-related permits (incl. reporting)

Responsibility: N/A

Website: N/A

Description: The service is not available online at present.

8. Public procurement

Responsibility:	Public Procurement Bureau, Ministry of Finance
Website:	https://www.e-nabavki.gov.mk
Description:	The latest version of the eProcurement system (EPPS) integrated a software solution for publishing contract notices and notifications, developed by the Public Procurement Bureau . The new system was supported by the eGov Project and is a one-stop-shop for public procurement in the country, which streamlines complex procedures and facilitates interaction between businesses and government institutions. It is also compliant with the European Union Directives and supports all forms of public procurement, including electronic auctions. All public institutions and businesses can register with the system and obtain the obligatory digital certificates for posting tenders or sending bids. Since January 2008, eAuctions have also become part of it.

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.

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