

Towards Borderless Electronic Services

e-SENS Project and Moving Towards the Digital Single Market

From the outset, the European integration process has addressed the creation of a single market based on four basic freedoms: the free circulation of people, goods, capital and services.

Over the past 20 years, progress has been made towards the creation of the single market in many areas thanks to the gradual elimination of technical and legal obstacles. The possibility of working or studying abroad or doing business beyond our borders has become a normal occurrence for the younger generations who are used to, for example, buying products via Internet from all types of companies, regardless of their location.

Furthermore, the Erasmus programme allows around 250,000 students a year to study or do placements abroad, approximately 13 million Europeans work in another Member State and around 21 million small and medium-sized companies carry out a significant part of their activity on an international level with companies from other Member States of the EU.

At the same time, over these years the Public Administrations of the different European countries have changed the way in which services are provided, and have evolved from over the counter paper forms to a model of providing electronic services. Therefore, in 2012, 64.2% of Spain's Income Tax Declarations were submitted by Internet, and approximately 90% of procedures can be accessed by electronic means.

However, electronic public administration services are often limited to citizens within the borders of the country in question. The Digital Agenda for Europe and the European Electronic Administration Action Plan 2011-2015 aim to change this situation. Both aim to create cross-border electronic services that foster the digital single market.

Therefore, for example, those electronic services that enable entrepreneurs to create and run a business anywhere in Europe, regardless of their original location and services that help citizens move across borders to study, work, live and receive a retirement pension anywhere in the EU are being fostered.

The European Commission, in an attempt to encourage Member States to provide these services, has promoted the development of large-scale pilot (LSP) cross-border services: STORK, epSOS, e-CODEX, PEPPOL, SPOCS.

The final step to complete the construction of the digital single market is the **e-SENS Project** which, based on the results of the previous five large-scale pilot projects, aims to identify and standardise common blocks to facilitate the creation of a cross-border electronic infrastructure. Over 100 partners from the 20 countries involved, including Spain through the Ministry for Finance and Public Administrations, the Ministry for Health, Social Services and Equality and the Ministry for Justice, are participating in the project.