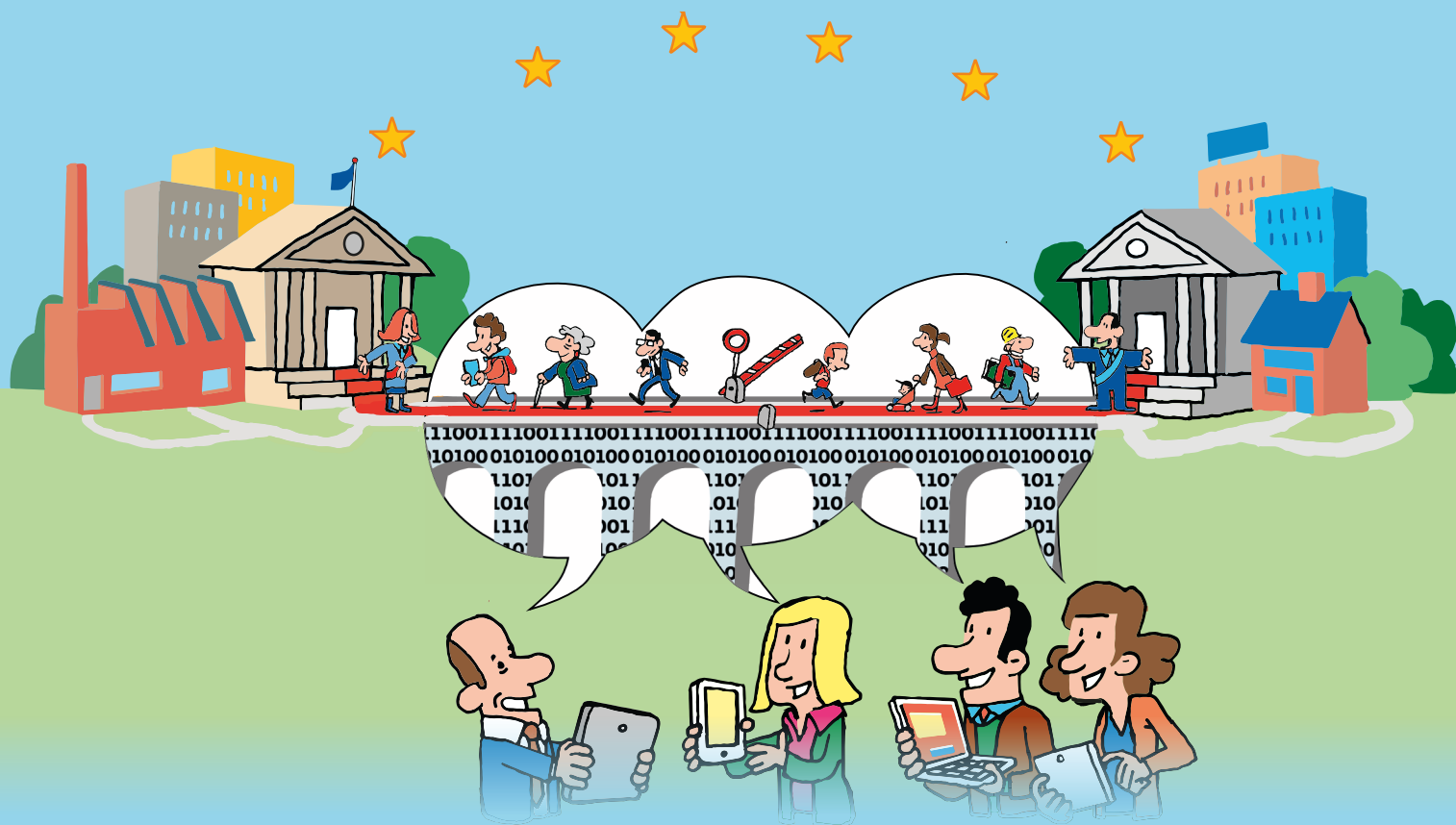European Commission

eGovernment in local and regional administrations

Guidance, tools and funding for implementation

Local and regional governments are essential for the digital transition in the European Union

Introduction

Local and regional administrations have an important role both in modernising administrations and services in areas of importance for society, and in taking responsibility for directly providing their citizens with services shaped to meet expectations in an increasingly digitalised world.

The European Commission supports the acceleration of the digital transformation of governments at all levels – national, regional and local through the EU eGovernment Action Plan 2016-2020. The digital transformation will benefit public administrations, businesses and citizens.

In this guidance you will find inspiration, tools and specific information on how to implement and find EU funding for modernising the public administration and services using digital solutions in local and regional administrations.

Strategy

Although many European Member States have an eGovernment Action Plan in place and have been increasingly developing digital strategies, it is becoming clear that local administrators should also develop an all-encompassing digital strategy with the involvement and inputs of all the departments of the city, local or regional council. Interaction within the ecosystem and with a broad range of key actors can be facilitated by digital platforms.

The eGovernment Action Plan 2016-2020 puts forward an ambitious vision for public administrations and recommends a set of seven principles that should guide governments at all levels – national, regional and local - when developing these strategies (see box).

- **Digital by Default**: Public administrations should deliver services digitally (including machine readable information) as the preferred option (while still keeping other channels open for those who are disconnected by choice or necessity). In addition, public services should be delivered through a single contact point or a one-stop-shop and via different channels.

- **Once only principle**: Public administrations should ensure that citizens and businesses supply the same information only once to a public administration. Public administration offices take action if permitted to internally re-use this data, in due respect of data protection rules, so that no additional burden falls on citizens and businesses.

- **Inclusiveness and accessibility**: Public administrations should design digital public services that are inclusive by default and cater for different needs such as those of the elderly and people with disabilities.

- **Openness & transparency**: Public administrations should share information and data between themselves and enable citizens and businesses to access control and correct their own data; enable users to monitor administrative processes that involve them; engage with and open up to stakeholders (such as businesses, researchers and non-profit organisations) in the design and delivery of services.

- **Cross-border by default**: Public administrations should make relevant digital public services available across borders and prevent further fragmentation to arise, thereby facilitating mobility within the Single Market.

- **Interoperability by default**: Public services should be designed to work seamlessly across the Single Market and across organisational silos, relying on the free movement of data and digital services in the European Union.

- **Trustworthiness & Security**: All initiatives should go beyond the mere compliance with the legal framework on personal data protection and privacy, and IT security, by integrating those elements in the design phase. These are important pre-conditions for increasing trust in and take-up of digital services.

Implementation

This section presents some of the eGovernment aspects that could be implemented in local and regional administrations in order to make a digital transition that will benefit citizens and businesses. These aspects should also be reflected in the strategy.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Beyond the need for sufficient broadband connectivity to tackle challenges related to for example Internet of Things, it is also important to ensure an appropriate underlying infrastructure, back-office arrangements and tools that will allow for increased efficiency and effectiveness. Coupling these efforts with Smart City infrastructures, shared services and standards can create great advantages.

You can find possible sources of information and inspiration below:

The **eIDAS Regulation** on electronic identification and trust services ensures that people and businesses can use their own national electronic identification schemes (eIDs) to access public services in other EU countries where eIDs are available. It also creates a European internal market for electronic signatures, electronic seals, time stamp, electronic delivery service and website authentication, by ensuring that they will work across borders and have the same legal status as traditional paper based processes. Although national administrations are responsible for the implementation of the regulation, local and regional administrationss can further benefit by strengthening people's trust in digital transactions and by opening up their systems also to the private sector.

The **Digital Service Infrastructure Building Blocks** (i.e. eID, eSignature, eDelivery, eTranslation and eInvoicing) are free of charge and based on open source, giving any local and regional administration the opportunity to use, share and develop the solutions needed. EU provides funding for the implementation of the building blocks (see the chapter about funding).

European Interoperability Framework: The new European Interoperability Framework gives specific guidance on how to set up interoperable digital public services.

The **European Innovation Partnership on Smart Cities and Communities** (EIP-SCC) brings together cities, industry and citizens to improve urban life through more sustainable integrated solutions. Their Action Cluster on Integrated Infrastructures & Processes (including Open Data) can also provide useful ideas.

OSLO 2.0.: Semantic standards for local administrations; standards and open specifications developed by the OSLO (Open Standards for Local Administrations) project. The main driver is "master data management" for local authorities and a better data integration with the base registers.

European Platform for Intelligent Cities (EPIC): EPIC offers 'Smart City in a Box'; a cloud computing infrastructure, offering a flexible, lightweight solution to the development and delivery of Smart City services. EPIC delivers services to its users and Smart City customers in the form of portlets, individual service components which can be easily combined and interchanged. This combination of portlets is complimented by EPIC's open-standard based Service Oriented Architecture (SOA) which allows the platform combine different services and components seamlessly.

Effective Service Delivery (ESD): The ESD network has developed a range of toolkits and shared services for collaborative working and for evidence-based improvements of locally delivered services. ESD is a hosted, secure, online resource that enables all local authorities to record their public facing services against a comprehensive list of services, processes and interactions, and to compare and monitor them against the characteristics and performance of other participating local authorities based on shared metadata standards. The ESD network enables local authorities to develop locally relevant services whilst sharing building blocks of functionalities and service types with each other where there are common needs, thereby saving effort and resources.

OPEN DATA AND OPEN SERVICES

There is a growing demand from businesses and citizens to have access to high quality, interoperable and re-usable data to provide new services, for example the use of spatial data. These are predominantly driven by the European legislation on re-use of public sector information (PSI Directive) and the Directive establishing an Infrastructure for Spatial Information in the European Community (INSPIRE Directive). Opening up public sector data and geographic information will facilitate the creation of new services (e.g. urban, land-use, traffic planning, Points of Interest, transport timetables, data on traffic accidents, cadastres, maps, addresses, buildings, parks, etc.) and foster data-driven businesses.

These opportunities can be harnessed at local level for instance by organising hackathons for developing mobile apps based on open government data, crowdsourcing of ideas, public sector innovation awards, and awards for citizens' contributions.

Examples of Open Data Projects

KLIP (BE): Central platform where all public administrations could share their information regarding the location of underground cables and pipes

TransportAPI (UK): Data aggregation and analytics service for public transport data in the UK

Topo GPS (NL): Mobile navigation application based on open data from the base registry of topography in the Netherlands

To unlock the economic potential of open data, it is important that measures are taken on the supply side to make high-value datasets truly open for reuse. This means among others that local and regional administrations prioritise their open data efforts by identifying high-value datasets, and make sure that these are available under an open licence, in (multiple) machine-readable formats, can be reused without restrictions, and can be easily found on data portals based on standardised metadata descriptions.

The value of geospatial data in the UK alone is already €15 million, while Spain estimates that their infomediary sector, based on public sector information, creates approximately 4.000 jobs that generate an estimated €500 million as turnover.

To reap the full benefits of this opportunity, local and regional administrations should also build mini-services - reusable, modular, digital public services - available and grouped together in platforms, from where they can be assembled using their application programming interfaces (APIs). As also recommended by the OECD, *'governments should regularly publish their data sets prioritising high value data sets (selected in consultation with the users), and performance data including APIs interacting with a dynamic open government ecosystem'*.

It is important that these APIs are based on open standards and technical specifications, so local and regional administrations need to promote standards-based ICT procurement and agree on a (limited) list of standards and technical specifications to which digital public services should comply.

Recommendations for opening up data
Source: SMART 2015/0041 - Towards a faster
implementation and uptake of open government

1. Conduct an impact assessment to prioritise on making high-value datasets available for reuse. Making public sector information available for reuse requires considerable investments. It is therefore important to make the right datasets available. One criterion to prioritise investments in open data relates to the potential societal and economic value that can be unlocked by opening up public datasets. The paper 'Value-based prioritisation of Open Government Data investments' can guide local and regional administrations to assess their own high-value datasets.

2. Opening up data from authentic sources (base registers). Authentic sources containing geographic information, company data, are high-value reference datasets that can potentially be used in many digital services.

3. Harmonise data licences: The use of a restricted set of already existing licences, like the Creative Commons public domain dedication (CC0) licence, is a good practice that should be more broadly adopted. The license should clearly be mentioned with the dataset in order to avoid confusion with the user.

4. Provide several formats and provide data as a service: To further reduce the barriers to reuse, it is important to provide the data in various open formats, including CSV, ODS, JSON, RDF, etc. Furthermore, it is important to look at domain-specific standards to improve the semantic interoperability of published datasets. For geographical data, for example, it is important to consider using the INSPIRE Directive data specifications which are based on the Geography Markup Language (GML).

5. Make commitments on the continuous provision of the data. Re-users of government data need to be sure that new versions of government data will remain available for reuse under the same or better conditions. It is useful to offer service level guarantees on high-value datasets, long-term availability being the most important one.

6. Improve the quality of the data. It can make sense for the public sector to improve the quality of its data to better address the needs of its re-users. This especially applies to data in authentic sources that is being used by both the public and private sector.

7. Make datasets easier to find via a *shared* data portal capability based on open standards: Easy accessibility and findability is an important aspect of open data. It seems a good practice to agree on a common metadata format, such as the DCAT Application Profile for Data Portals in Europe (DCAT-AP) for describing open datasets. This metadata format can be used to exchange descriptions of datasets between data portals. Connecting all datasets to a shared data portal where all information is based on the same metadata standards, increases the findability of datasets, but also allows users to more easily combine and link different datasets.

8. Require data publishers to provide accurate metadata about genesis / provenance / lineage. This information will allow reusers to better understand whether a dataset is fit-for-purpose.

9. Explore feedback mechanisms to improve data quality: Creating feedback mechanisms for users can allow for user to increase data quality.

10. Explore feedback mechanism to match data supply and demand of datasets: Creating a feedback mechanism can allow users to demand for specific datasets in which they see value.

Ensuring local access to digital technologies, data and services has become a catalyst for change. It increases the accountability of local governments, the creation of citizen-centric and more efficient public services as well as the emergence of the right framework for local firms to experiment and innovate and to develop real-time city technologies. Local authorities should also put in place procedures and policies allowing efficient and secure data transfer and usage.

High quality digital registers (e.g. base registers, land registers, etc.) should be interconnected in order to facilitate data exchange between different parts of the administration, so the so-called 'once-only principle'[1] could be implemented.

You can find possible sources of information and inspiration below:

The **European Open Data Portal** aims to improve accessibility and increase the value of Open Data, from data publishing to data re-use.

Citadel On the move project tools, which can help to create Mobile Applications using Open Data.

Open Transport Network project tools, which can turn open geospatial data into insights and easy-to-read, visually appealing maps. Help your city or business solve transport related challenges by applying innovative insights and co-creating new services together with developers, data providers and community representatives.

The **Open Knowledge Foundation** supports local authorities that lack the resources to find the data, make it available and make sure it is re-usable.

The **OECD Digital Government Toolkit** could be of interest to local and regional administrations, to encourage innovation, transparency, and efficiency in the public sector.

The **European Data Portal Library** offers a central access point to material on and around Open Data. Material from many European-funded projects is made available here. It also includes an eLearning Programme and an Open Gold book for Data Managers and Data Holders.

Open Data Handbook: Guidebook for civil servants (and everybody else interested in opening up information) that can support them when they want to open up data to offer guidelines and educate civil servants on what to take into account regarding privacy regulation, it explains the issues regarding republishing and reusing data and what technical preparations should be made in order to further open up data, etc.

Open Data Institute Guides: The Open Data Institute has published a number of interesting guides related to 'Engaging with users' and 'How to make a business case for open data'.

Best Practices for Sharing Public Sector Information: developed by the recently concluded EU project Share PSI 2.0 project.

It is important to ensure that citizens and businesses feel comfortable using open government assets and sharing information with public administrations, in addition to collaborating with each other in the context of digital public services or to take part in policy making. Therefore, it is very important for the local and regional administrations to ensure trust. Without trust citizens and businesses will be unwilling to collaborate with government.

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[1] The 'once only principle' implies that public administrations ensure that citizens and businesses supply the same information only once to a public administration. Public administration offices take action if permitted to internally re-use this data, in due respect of data protection rules, so that no additional burden falls on citizens and businesses.

PARTICIPATORY, OPEN DECISION-MAKING

Opening up certain aspects of decision making (such as spatial planning or participatory budgeting) allows people to reconnect with their governments and exercise their civic rights. Opening up certain decision-making processes of the public sector allow for wider inputs, increasing transparency, legitimacy and accountability of government. One example is 'Participatory Budgeting' which is a structured deliberative process where non-elected citizens are entrusted to decide how to allocate part of the budget of the Local Authority (e.g. a municipality). It is a very effective way for public administrations to address citizens' needs, and an impactful way to introduce citizen engagement at different steps of the policy-making process.

Examples of participatory open decision-making

Idées Paris / Paris participatory budget (FR): Empowering Parisian citizens to make proposals for spending 5% (or €500 million) of the city's investment budget.

Vouliwatch (GR): A platform for citizens and civil servants to engage in the legislative and political process in order to achieve better laws created with active citizen support.

Refugees Welcome (DE): Citizens can register and offer a room at their home, in order to provide a home for refugees.

EMPATIA: Innovation project, piloting participatory budgeting in pilots in four countries, Portugal, Germany, Italy and Czech Republic

COLLABORATION FOR USER-FRIENDLY SERVICES

Local and regional administrations are increasingly collaborating with third parties (e.g. civil society organisations, business associations, individual citizens, businesses, other public administrations, etc.) when designing and delivering public services. A collaborative approach to service development and provision will increase the quality of the service and ownership. With this in mind, it is recommended to create guidelines to standardise procedures for collaboration and licence agreements.

Recommendations for collaboration with third parties
Source: SMART 2015/0041 - Towards a faster implementation and uptake of open government

1. Create and communicate about a procedure for collaboration, so that contributors understand how and to which extent their input will be taken into account;

2. Develop and communicate about a licensing framework, consisting of a contributor agreement (incoming intellectual property rights) and corresponding licence (outgoing intellectual property rights) to guarantee that the contributed intellectual property can be freely reused;

3. Create and practice a methodology for service design that adheres to important principles such as for example: (i) *Stakeholder engagement*: Create a methodology and tools for engaging users to participate in user workshops, interviews, online questionnaires, etc.; (ii) *Asking early feedback*: share ideas, analysis documents, screen designs, source code, etc. as soon as possible with relevant stakeholders so that they can provide feedback; and (iii) *Release early and frequently*: to reduce the risk in public service design, it is often a good idea to release a prototype early in the development process. This will ensure quick user feedback, incremental improvement, and reduce the risk of building a service that does not fully meet user requirements.

4. Provide guidelines for public procurement

5. Openly measure and evaluate the performance of (digital) public services. Data on how (digital) public services are being delivered and used can reveal useful information on how to further improve the service. Web analytics can reveal how digital public services are actually being used, while key performance indicators like usage statistics, service delivery costs, etc. can help make better decisions on improving digital public services.

Local and regional administrations can also create a set of procedures, licensing frameworks, and methodologies for collaborative service design.

You can find inspiring practices below:

Process and methodology for developing core vocabularies (developed by the Interoperability Solutions for European Public Administrations (ISA) Programme of the European Commission): Describes a procedure for co-creating technical specifications in open Working Groups, with experts from public administrations, academia, and industry.

Government service design manual: The United Kingdom offers a framework describing the different phases that can help public administrations in the service design in order to create better public services. The manual stresses that users should come first and this manual puts them in the centre. Furthermore, the manual ensures that less money is wasted since it starts small and scales it up step by step in order to meet stakeholder needs and in order to overcome obstacles in the early stages of the product development.

User modelling, adaptation and personalisation: Approaches for the personalisation of inclusive, personal and interactive services to citizens, mining of user behaviour, opinion mining, and sentiment analysis.

Gov.uk Performance Platform: Keeps track of key performance indicators of digital public services provided by public administrations in the UK in a central location. Each administration can apply to get their own performance dashboard.

Personalisation methods in Smart Cities and Territories through user modelling, adaptation and personalisation; approaches for the personalisation of inclusive, personal and interactive services to citizens, mining of user behaviour, opinion mining and sentiment analysis.

Recommendations for Open Government Services
Source: SMART 2014/0066 - Analysis of the Value of New Generation of eGovernment Services

Policy Objectives	Recommendations for administrations
OPENNESS AS A GRADUAL LEARNING PROCESS	Identify priority services Check whether the service is already being delivered by third parties Prioritize low-input services Ensure learning and fine-tuning of services after launch Early involvement of users
ADJUST THE INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK	Adopt action plan Ensure "collaborative by design" principle in government services Provide guidelines to civil servants
DESIGN CLEAR INCENTIVES	Adapt staff regulation Create centre of competence Recognise the effort in budget distribution Integrate procurement with innovation activities Ensure feedback to citizens
DISSEMINATE PROACTIVELY	Public, high reach events for citizens Restricted events for civil servants Monitor dissemination
IMPROVE THE EVIDENCE BASE	Systematically deploy evaluation

PUBLIC SECTOR INNOVATION

Local and regional administrations can serve as an excellent ground for innovation; with the aim to ensure a business-friendly environment, pull innovation to the market due to their large purchasing power and significantly improve the quality of life for citizens.

ICT-enabled Public Sector Innovation can be defined as the process of generating new ideas, and implementing them to create value for society either through new or improved processes or services, relying on the transformative power of digital technologies.

The Commission's Expert Group on Public Sector Innovation has looked into innovation **IN** the public sector and innovation **THROUGH** the public sector.

Innovation IN the public sector is innovation focusing on the internal (administrative) and external (policy) objectives. The following set of principles should be at the heart of the public sector – each of which can be facilitated by digital means – when innovating IN:

- Co-design and co-creation of innovative solutions (with other parts of government, businesses, the third sector and citizens);
- Adopting new and collaborative service delivery models (across public, private and non-governmental actors, both within and across national borders);
- Embracing creative disruption from technology (the pervasive use of social media, mobility, big data, cloud computing packaged in new digital government offerings);
- Adopting an attitude of experimentation and entrepreneurship (government itself needs to become bolder and more entrepreneurial).

Beyond innovation in the public sector, it is equally important to consider how **innovation THROUGH the public sector** can happen, as this can contribute to generating future economic growth.

The Strategic Policy Forum on Digital Entrepreneurship has prepared a 'Blueprint for cities and regions as launch pads for digital transformation' (see box below), illustrating the strategic role of cities and regions in leading a modern, smart transformation of their territories and the importance of a holistic approach, including a multitude of actors, in order to grasp all the digital opportunities offered by the transformation.

The blueprint identifies the following critical attributes for a successful digital transformation process:

Leadership and collaboration for a smart governance of the local digital ecosystem
- ✓ Create a forward-looking digital strategy and build a shared vision around it
- ✓ Build long-lasting partnerships and trust relationships
- ✓ Collaborate across sectorial boundaries and value chains

Digital skills and entrepreneurs to accelerate the digital transformation process
- ✓ Transform your local population into digital talents
- ✓ Attract global digital talents
- ✓ Develop an entrepreneurial culture

Access to data and technologies for applied solutions to local challenges
- ✓ Develop a digital city strategy
- ✓ Open access to data through the launch of open data platforms
- ✓ Ensure local access to digital technologies

Key infrastructures and investments for digital launch pads
- ✓ Ensure the availability of critical digital infrastructures for the digital transformation of local businesses
- ✓ Secure investments in digital infrastructures
- ✓ Ensure the economic sustainability of local investments in digital infrastructure.

PUBLIC PROCUREMENT AND INNOVATION PROCUREMENT

A powerful way to foster innovation is by working with small, agile innovative companies – start-ups - to create an environment where innovation thrives, and where new solutions can emerge and flourish to improve outcomes.

Start-ups are often at the forefront of innovation, yet this involves taking a risk by choosing to work with them. The so-called *Gov.Tech* sector – supplying the infrastructure and tools government agencies use every day to do their jobs - has the power to transform how government and public sector organisations deliver the outcomes the public wants. Often however, the complexity of public sector procurement frequently makes innovation difficult to realise.

Traditional public procurement practices often depart from a predefined and fixed set of requirements and do not allow collaboration and stakeholder feedback. The new procurement rules allow for significant flexibility. Public administrations can make publicly funded projects more agile and responsive to stakeholder feedback, for example by procuring a minimum viable product (MVP) at fixed price, and agreeing to a volume of further change requests. This requires a new approach to public procurement, expertise, governance, and cultural change, making public servants more actively involved in the projects such that they can ensure a closer follow-up with suppliers.

In order to attract small, innovative companies, local and regional administrations should consider the size of contracts and should allow these companies to keep the intellectual property rights. A set of guidelines for public procurement could help make public procurement more susceptible to collaboration, to building expertise, and to building an organisation structure and culture to allow it. The Action Cluster on Business Models, Finance and Procurement under the European Innovation Partnership on Smart Cities and

Communities (EIP-SCC) can also provide useful ideas for scaling developed solutions.

When procuring digital solutions, public administrations are encouraged to refer to common sets of ICT standards and profiles in their calls for tenders. The European Catalogue of ICT standards for public procurement is a one-stop-shop at the EU level to support and guide public procurers in order to avoid vendor lock-in.
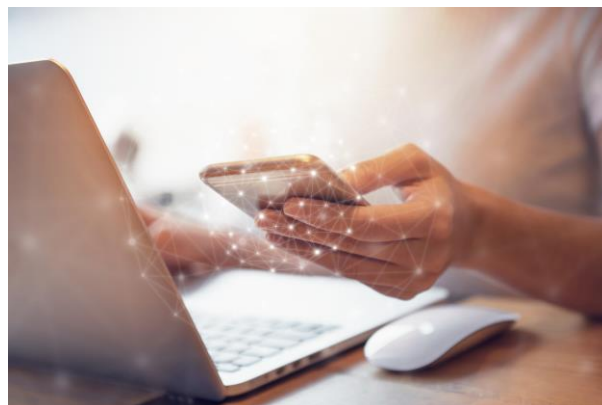
Increasingly, public administrations have been exploiting their purchasing power to foster innovation, by employing two instruments. Pre-Commercial Procurement invests in *Research and Development* before a new product or service has been launched in the market place. Public Procurement of Innovative solutions supports commercialisation and early adoption of near-to-market products, processes or service.

Under **Pre-Commercial Procurement**, the public administration buys R&D from several alternative suppliers at the same time, and then compares and evaluates the best value for money solutions at every phase of validation, reducing the number of participating suppliers each time. R&D services are exempted from the scope of EU procurement directives but the EU Treaty principles and competition rules still apply.

In the case of **Public Procurement of Innovative solutions**, the customer is a large buyer or a buyers group, with purchasing volume that is sufficient to make mass production for suppliers viable. This 'critical mass' of demand triggers potential suppliers to make the necessary investments to adapt/scale up their activities and meet the performance and price requirements for mass market deployment.

EU funded joint cross-border Pre-Commercial Procurementprojects

- Cloud for Europe – Efficient and safe cloud services for governments' use
- PICSE - Network of procurers on European science cloud
- HNSciCloud - A marketplace of innovative cloud services for scientific users
- COMPLETE - Network of procurers for novel broadband network solutions
- SELECT for Cities - Enabling urban IoE applications and services
- PREFORMA – Towards a sustainable ecosystem for long term digital

INNOVATION HUBS

Innovation Hubs or digital service offices have emerged in governments around the world over the past few years to respond to and repair urgent technology failures, or as an alternative structural approach to rethinking processes and implementation strategies in digital transformation efforts.

They are typically small, specialised teams of excellence, distributed in the regions, having worked in other areas of digital government and can therefore provide information, solutions and guidance to other local or regional authorities, business and citizens. They can function as one-stop-shops that provide access to knowledge, expertise and technology.

Example of Innovation hub

Digital Services Incubator: Driven by the French government's Secretariat-general for Government Modernisation, its aim is to spread the culture of digital innovation throughout the administration through State Start-ups. With the objective to deliver a digital public service, they create a small team that has 6 months to prove a digital product that can improve their current situation.

Funding

The eGovernment Action Plan 2016-2020 does not have a dedicated budget or funding instrument; it aims however to serve as a catalyst to coordinate public sector modernisation efforts, funding resources and accompanying measures that are available through different EU programmes.

This overview explains the available EU funding instruments to support the implementation of eGovernment projects in line with the eGovernment Action Plan. Moreover, it provides information on learning platforms or networks for exchange of expertise, good practice use case databases as well as a number of awards to foster eGovernment implementation in local and regional administrations.

Overview of available EU funds for eGovernment

Which funding to choose depends on which type of project you want to do, its maturity level and scope. You can receive funding for many types of eGovernment projects – from innovation and research projects to operation projects.

> **Funding for eGovernment projects are usually granted from three funding programmes:**
> 1. The European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF)
>   - European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)
>   - European Social Fund (ESF)
>   - European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)
> 2. Horizon 2020 (H2020)
> 3. Connecting Europe Facility (CEF)

The European Structural and Investment Funds are jointly managed by the European Commission and the EU countries. This means that the projects are not selected by the Commission, but by the Managing Authorities in the Member States. Horizon 2020 and CEF, on the other hand, are managed by the European Commission. The funding from these programmes is granted through calls for proposals and calls for tenders.

To get funding for your project from these funds, you will need to identify a relevant call for proposal/tender and carefully follow the specific guidelines on how to apply. To be eligible for funding, you may need to look for a project partner in other countries.

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EUROPEAN STRUCTURAL AND INVESTMENT FUNDS (ESIF)

The *European Structural and Investments Funds* (ESIF) are set up to implement the Cohesion Policy of the European Union. The Cohesion Policy targets all regions and cities in the EU to support job creation, business competitiveness, economic growth, sustainable development, and improve citizens' quality of life.

ESIF FUNDING INSTRUMENTS

European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)
Between 2014 and 2020 around € 3.4 billion will support eGovernment services and applications (including e-Procurement, ICT for reform of public administration, cyber-security, trust & privacy measures, e-Justice and e-Democracy, etc.) and around € 1 billion will support the access to public sector information (open data, e-Culture, digital libraries, e-Content, e-Tourism, etc.).

In order to make sure that ESIF investments achieve maximum impact, Member States and regions that wish to use funding for ICT-related projects – including eGovernment - have been required to put in place a strategic policy framework for digital growth. For eGovernment investments, in addition, the project should fit into the relevant strategy for public administration efficiency and skills and in particular be in line with the legal, organisational and/or procedural public sector reform actions and the integrated actions for simplification and rationalisation of administrative procedures.

European Social Fund (ESF)

The ESF can also support eGovernment. Bulgaria, Estonia, Hungary, Croatia, Italy and Portugal have specifically programmed ESF investments to provide support to local and regional administrations, including with regard to eGovernment. In the current programming period of 2014-2020, overall € 4.2 billion will be spent on administrative capacity building, financed by ESF and/or ERDF.

The **ESF Transnational Platform** supports stakeholders' willingness to cooperate beyond frontiers. The Platform runs Thematic Networks and facilitates coordinated calls for proposals under the European Social Fund. One of the nine thematic networks (each of them is run by one Member State) is dedicated to 'governance and public administration'. With regard to eGovernment, these networks could enable mutual learning among countries and stakeholders and facilitate coordinated ESF calls for proposals.

European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)

The EU's rural development policy helps the rural areas of the EU to meet the wide range of economic, environmental and social challenges of the 21st century. The EARDF foresees, inter alia, that support under this measure could cover 'broadband infrastructure, including its creation, improvement and expansion, passive broadband infrastructure and provision of access to broadband and public e-government solutions'.

APPLICATION FOR PROJECTS IN A MEMBER STATE OR REGION

The projects are not selected by the Commission, but by the Managing Authorities in each Member State and/or region. It is the Member States who decide how money from the ESIF funds will be spent. The investment priorities, specific objectives and concrete actions are presented in Operational Programmes which can apply for a whole country or a specific region.

To apply for funding for eGovernment projects, you should, therefore, check the European Operational Programmes in your region or country to see if the programme supports eGovernment projects. Some countries have an ongoing procedure, while others accept applications at certain times only. Be aware that *Austria, Belgium, Denmark* and *The Netherlands* do not have Operational Programmes that supports eGovernment.

Visit the website of the managing authority in your region for more details.

> **You can find information on how to apply here:** http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/funding/accessing-funds/

To support managing authorities and public administrations in the design and effective implementation of ESIF ICT investments and allow them to learn from good practices, a guide called *Enhancing access to, and the use and quality of ICT* and a *thematic guidance fiche* is available.

APPLICATION FOR TRANSNATIONAL AND CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION PROJECTS

In addition to the Operational Programmes, which cover entire Member States and/or regions, there are also **Cooperation Programmes** involving more than one country. The relevant transnational cooperation projects are listed below.

INTERREG (EUROPEAN TERRITORIAL CO-OPERATION)

in this programming period has a budget of € 10.1 billion invested in over 100 cooperation programmes between regions and territorial, social and economic partners. The relevant programmes for eGovernment include:

Cross-border – Interreg V-A, which covers 38 internal EU borders from at least two different Member States lying directly on the borders or adjacent to them. It aims to tackle common challenges identified jointly in the border regions and to exploit the untapped growth potential in border areas, while enhancing the cooperation process for the purposes of the overall harmonious development of the Union. There are 60 cooperation programmes with an allocation of € 6.6 billion involved in a wide variety of activities linked to the maturity of border cooperation. The cross-border cooperation programmes are managed by joint structures, situated in one of the countries, responsible for the whole programme.

Transnational – Interreg V-B, which covers larger areas of co-operation such as the Baltic Sea, Alpine, Danube and Mediterranean regions. There are 15 transnational corporation programmes with a budget of € 2.1 billion.

URBACT is a networking programme worth about EUR 100 million. Here the idea is for a group of cities to come together on an issue, which could be eGovernment, to exchange and try to build on each other's experience to develop pragmatic solutions.

THE URBAN AGENDA FOR THE EU

strives to involve urban authorities in achieving better legislation, better funding and better knowledge. In the Digital Transition Partnership, amongst others, partners look into issues faced when developing local digital services or when using or storing personal data. There is approximately EUR 100 billion of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and € 15 billion of the European Social Fund (ESF), which is spent in cities. In addition, the Urban Innovative Actions (UIA), which has a budget of EUR 372 million for 2014-2020 managed by the European Commission, will finance projects to experiment with new ideas and to test them in the real world, with real people and real problems.

HORIZON 2020
SOCIETAL CHALLENGE 6

Horizon 2020 is the financial instrument implementing the Innovation Union, a Europe 2020 flagship initiative aimed at securing Europe's global competitiveness.
By coupling research and innovation, Horizon 2020 is helping to achieve this with its emphasis on excellent science, industrial leadership and tackling societal challenges.

Societal Challenge 6, 'Europe in a changing world – inclusive, innovative and reflective societies' is the relevant challenge for eGovernment funding in local and regional administrations. The call topics are very much in line with the eGovernment Action Plan in terms of Open Data, Open Process and Open Service for joined-up and open government, with an emphasis on participation, collaboration and transparency.

Of the eGovernment pilot projects, almost half are at local level, with the national level accounting for over a third. The regional level accounts for 15.2%. The projects at the local and regional level normally target youth, students, senior citizens, academics and the culture and tourism sector.
Funding is given for research and innovation actions. If you wish to respond to a call, you must submit a proposal before the deadline. The **Participant Portal** has clear instructions to guide you through the process. Be aware that many calls require a team of at least three partners. If you need help to identify a potential partner with particular competences, facilities or experience you can also search for partners on the participant portal or through your National Contact Point.

> **You can find the upcoming calls here:**
> http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/

CONNECTING EUROPE FACILITY (CEF) -
DIGITAL SERVICE INFRASTRUCTURES

CEF is a key EU instrument to facilitate cross-border interaction between public administrations, businesses and citizens, by deploying digital service infrastructures (DSIs) and broadband networks. A € 1.05 billion budget is earmarked for trans-European digital services for 2014-2020, of which € 114 million are for broadband activities, while € 937.5 million are dedicated to Digital Service Infrastructures.

The main component of a Digital Service Infrastructure is the core service platform which is a central hub at EU level which creates a link between the national infrastructures.

There are two different types of DSI's, namely the generic **Building Block DSI's** and the **Sector Specific DSI's**. The generic and reusable Building Block DSIs are eID & eSignature, eDelivery, eInvoicing, eTranslation and Cyber Security. These are intended to be reused in other digital services. Reuse of the Building Block DSIs results in reduction of costs and time-to market. The sector-specific DSIs deliver online services within one specific policy area and often support implementation of EU legislation. Examples of sector specific DSIs are eProcurement, eHealth, Open Data and eJustice.

The CEF building blocks

| eID | eDelivery | eInvoicing | eSignature | eTranslation |

Both regional and local governments can apply for grants, as long as they comply with the eligibility criteria for applicants and actions proposed for funding, as laid down in the Work Programme and the call for proposals. The proposed action must however, have the explicit support of Member States.

> **You can find the upcoming calls here:**
> https://ec.europa.eu/inea/en/connecting-europe-facility/cef-telecom/apply-funding

Tools and learning platforms

ISA² programme

The ISA² programme supports the development of tools, services and frameworks that enable public administrations, businesses and citizens in Europe to benefit from **interoperable cross-border and cross-sector public services** in the area of eGovernment. Solutions developed by ISA² are generally available for **free** and can be found [here](#).

Joinup

Joinup is a collaborative platform funded via the ISA² Programme. It offers several services that aim to help eGovernment professionals share their experience with each other and can help you find, choose, re-use, develop and implement interoperability solutions.

TAIEX REGIO PEER 2 PEER is designed to share expertise between bodies that manage funding under the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the Cohesion Fund on various topics, including eGovernment and ICT. As in total a large volume of money is invested in eGovernment in various Member States, with many projects being implemented, other authorities could learn from the experience. Three types of actions are possible: Expert Missions, Study Visits and Workshops.

Observatory of Public Sector Innovation (OPSI)

Developed by the OECD, it collects and analyses examples and shared experiences of public sector innovation on all levels – local, regional and central - to provide practical advice on how to make innovations work, including many examples of digital innovations. The OPSI provides a place for sharing, discussing and co-creating solutions that work.

Quality public administrations - A toolbox for practitioners

The Toolbox aims to support, guide and encourage those who want to build public administrations that will create prosperous, fair and resilient societies. It is intended as a reference and resource, not a prescription or a panacea, by signposting readers to existing EU policies and international practices, illustrated by almost 170 inspirational case studies.

Awards to foster eGovernment implementation in local and regional administrations

European Capital of Innovation Award

The European Commission created the European Capital of Innovation award to acknowledge the role of cities as places of systemic innovation, with a capacity to connect people and places,
and public and private actors. To win the price of € 1 million, cities will particularly have to prove how they create the local conditions to innovate by experimenting, engaging, expanding and empowering.

RegioStars awards

The objective of the RegioStars Awards is to identify good practices in regional development and to highlight original and innovative projects which could be attractive and inspiring to other regions.

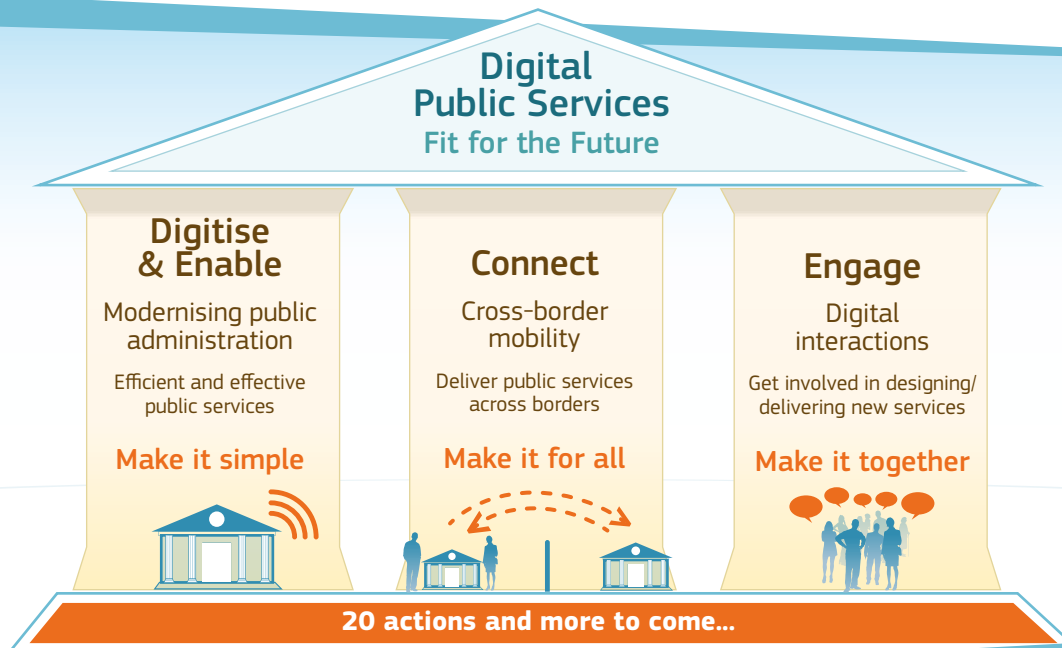## European Public Sector Award (EPSA)

The EPSA brings together the best, most innovative and efficient performers from the European public sector. Outstanding administrative performances are, after all, produced under different conditions within Europe.

eGovernment Action Plan 2016-2020
Accelerating the digital transformation of Government

Digital Public Services
Fit for the Future

Digitise & Enable
Modernising public administration

Efficient and effective public services

Make it simple

Connect
Cross-border mobility

Deliver public services across borders

Make it for all

Engage
Digital interactions

Get involved in designing/ delivering new services

Make it together

20 actions and more to come...

Opening public administrations
Across administrative departments   -   Across Member States   -   Towards third parties

Common Services

MT*
* Machine Translation

eID

eInv*
* eInvoicing

20 actions identified, propose new ones!

For Citizens	For Businesses	For Public Administrations
Live, study & work	Make business	Be user-friendly

Express your needs, discuss and propose new actions
Participate through the eGovernment4EU platform

Make it work!

@EU_eGov

https://ec.europa.eu/futurium/en/egovernment4eu/

European Commission