



ICT for Government  
and Public Services



European Commission  
Information Society and Media

## **The European eGovernment Action Plan 2011-2015**

**Harnessing ICT to promote smart, sustainable &  
innovative Government**





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**COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN  
PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL  
COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS**

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The Digital Agenda for Europe<sup>1</sup> sets eGovernment within a comprehensive set of measures aimed at exploiting the benefits of information and communication technologies (ICT) across Europe. At a time of highly constrained public resources, ICT can help the public sector develop innovative ways of delivering its services to citizens while unleashing efficiencies and driving down costs.

The implementation of the first European eGovernment Action Plan<sup>2</sup> has seen governments across all Member States exchange good practice, and resulted in a number of large-scale pilot projects which are developing concrete solutions for rolling out cross-border eGovernment services<sup>3</sup>. An online community of practitioners<sup>4</sup>, established in 2002, has provided a focus for debate among 80.000 participants on the potential to provide innovative solutions in areas such as eGovernment, health services, and inclusion. Progress has also been made in the re-use of public sector information<sup>5</sup>, and an electronic public procurement platform developed to allow companies from across Europe to offer their services to governments outside their home country<sup>6</sup>. EU-wide electronic identity systems are coming into existence, which will enable people to access public services electronically across the EU<sup>7</sup>.

The availability of innovative technologies such as social networks has increased the expectations of citizens in terms of responsiveness when accessing all kinds of services on line. However, cross-border eGovernment services are few and, even where eGovernment services are offered, the majority of EU citizens are reluctant to use them<sup>8</sup>. There is clearly a need to move towards a more open model of design, production and delivery of online services, taking advantage of the possibility offered by collaboration between citizens, entrepreneurs and civil society. The combination of new technologies, open specifications, innovative architectures and the availability of public sector information can deliver greater value to citizens with fewer resources.

The Commission is therefore proposing a second eGovernment Action Plan which aims to realise the ambitious vision contained in the Declaration made at the 5th Ministerial

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<sup>1</sup> COM(2010) 245.

<sup>2</sup> eGovernment Action Plan 2006, COM 2006/173 of 25.04.2006  
[http://ec.europa.eu/information\\_society/activities/egovernment/library/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/egovernment/library/index_en.htm)

<sup>3</sup> CIP ICT PSP:  
[http://ec.europa.eu/information\\_society/activities/egovernment/implementation/ict\\_psp/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/egovernment/implementation/ict_psp/index_en.htm)

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.epractice.eu/>

<sup>5</sup> Directive 2003/98/EC on re-use of public sector information, 17.11.2003, OJ L345, 31.12.2003, 90-96

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.peppol.eu>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.eid-stork.eu>

<sup>8</sup> Europe's Digital Competitiveness Report 2010, p.88.

See [http://intra.info.cec.eu.int/C4/docs/main%20page/european\\_competitiveness\\_report\\_2010.pdf](http://intra.info.cec.eu.int/C4/docs/main%20page/european_competitiveness_report_2010.pdf)

eGovernment Conference (the 'Malmö Declaration'<sup>9</sup>), which was also supported by industry<sup>10</sup> and by a citizens' panel<sup>11</sup>.

According to this ambitious vision, by 2015 European public administrations will be *"recognised for being open, flexible and collaborative in their relations with citizens and businesses. They use eGovernment to increase their efficiency and effectiveness and to constantly improve public services in a way that caters for user's different needs and maximises public value, thus supporting the transition of Europe to a leading knowledge-based economy."*

The Malmö Declaration sets out 4 political priorities for all European public administrations over the next 5 years:

- Citizens and businesses are empowered by eGovernment services designed around users' needs and developed in collaboration with third parties, as well as by increased access to public information, strengthened transparency and effective means for involvement of stakeholders in the policy process,
- Mobility in the Single Market is reinforced by seamless eGovernment services for the setting up and running of a business and for studying, working, residing and retiring anywhere in the European Union,
- Efficiency and effectiveness is enabled by a constant effort to use eGovernment to reduce the administrative burden, improve organisational processes and promote a sustainable low-carbon economy,
- The implementation of the policy priorities is made possible by creating the appropriate key enablers and by establishing the necessary legal and technical preconditions.

Governments need to provide better public services with fewer resources. Each of the above political priorities works towards that aim, as well as providing new and better ways to engage with citizens. The emergence of innovative technologies such as "service-oriented architectures" (SOA), or "clouds" of services, together with more open specifications which allow for greater sharing, re-use and interoperability reinforce the ability of ICT to play a key role in this quest for efficiency in the public sector.

As part of the Commission-wide effort to promote a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy for the European Union, as outlined in the Europe 2020 Strategy<sup>12</sup>, this Action Plan contributes towards fulfilling two key objectives of the Digital Agenda for Europe, in particular :

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<sup>9</sup> By 2015 European public administrations should be "recognised for being open, flexible and collaborative in their relations with citizens and businesses. They use eGovernment to increase their efficiency and effectiveness and to constantly improve public services in a way that caters for user's different needs and maximises public value, thus supporting the transition of Europe to a leading knowledge-based economy." See <http://www.egov2009.se/wp-content/uploads/Ministerial-Declaration-on-eGovernment.pdf>. This action is defined in the Digital Agenda for Europe, and built on the previous bi-annual Ministerial meetings of Brussels in 2001, Como in 2003, Manchester in 2005 and Lisbon in 2007. See [http://ec.europa.eu/information\\_society/activities/egovernment/library/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/egovernment/library/index_en.htm). This also included the commitment on the part of candidate and EFTA countries.

<sup>10</sup> Declaration by "DigitalEurope", see [http://www.digitaleurope.org/index.php?id=1068&id\\_article=390](http://www.digitaleurope.org/index.php?id=1068&id_article=390)

<sup>11</sup> Open declaration on public services 2.0, <http://eups20.wordpress.com/the-open-declaration>

<sup>12</sup> COM (2010) 2020

- By 2015, a number of key cross-border services will be available on line – enabling entrepreneurs to set up and run a business anywhere in Europe independently of their original location, and allowing citizens to study, work, reside and retire anywhere in the European Union.
- By 2015, 50% of EU citizens will have used eGovernment services.

Since eGovernment services are also of great importance for businesses, this Action Plan also aims that by 2015, 80% of enterprises will have used eGovernment.

## 1. SCOPE OF THE ACTION PLAN

This Action Plan aims at maximising the complementary nature of national and European policy instruments. It supports the transition from current eGovernment to a new generation of open, flexible and collaborative seamless eGovernment services at local, regional, national and European levels that will empower citizens and businesses.

There are powerful political and economic reasons to support European collaboration on eGovernment. Joint action on eGovernment can contribute to overcoming the current economic crisis by using public resources more efficiently and reducing public expenditures. eGovernment services can be developed more economically by coordinating and pooling public and private resources.

Given the central role of national governments in the implementation of this action plan the European Commission's main responsibility is to improve the conditions for development of cross-border eGovernment services provided to citizens and businesses regardless of their country of origin. This includes establishing pre-conditions, such as interoperability, eSignatures and eIdentification. These services strengthen the internal market and complement EU legislative acts and their effectiveness<sup>13</sup> in a number of domains where ICT can improve delivery of services; such as in procurement, justice, health, environment, mobility and social security, and support the implementation of citizens' initiatives<sup>14</sup> with ICT tools . The Commission will aim to lead by example.

## 2. PRIORITIES AND ACTIONS

Various actions related to the four political priorities identified are proposed below, together with the planned timing. These can be categorised in three groups, depending on the actors involved and the competence defined in the Treaty:

- Where Member States are leading and rely on their own resources, the Commission will help by supporting and coordinating activities. The measures proposed will focus on *setting targets* with the Member States and on how to achieve these targets

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<sup>13</sup> Such EU legislative acts include: the Services Directive (2006/123/EC), the eSignatures Directive (1999/93/EC), the Procurement Directives (2004/17/EC and 2004/18/EC), the Data Protection Directive (95/46/EC), the Directive on the re-use of public sector information (2003/98/EC), the Infrastructure for Spatial Information in the European Community (INSPIRE Directive 2007/2/EC), the public access to environmental information Directive (2003/4/EC).

<sup>14</sup> Art. 11 of the Treaty on European Union and Art. 24 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

by means of measures such as exchanging best practice and information, conducting studies and benchmarking.

- Where the Commission and the Member States work *jointly to develop, deploy or improve cross-border services*, the Commission will take the lead in activities where joint resources are used, while the Member States will bear the final responsibility for implementing activities using their own resources. The measures proposed will include research and development, pilot projects, collaborative development of services by Member States and transfer of knowledge to the market.
- Where the Commission can *create enabling conditions*, the measures proposed will include adopting legal instruments, setting standards, formulating common frameworks, implementing generic tools, providing (re-usable) technical building blocks and ensuring interoperability.

## 2.1. User Empowerment

Empowerment means increasing the capacity of citizens, businesses and other organisations to be pro-active in society through the use of new technological tools. Public services can gain in efficiency and users in satisfaction by meeting the expectations of users better and being designed around their needs and in collaboration with them whenever possible. Empowerment also means that governments should provide easy access to public information, improve transparency and allow effective involvement of citizens and businesses in the policy-making process.

### 2.1.1. Services designed around users needs and Inclusive Services

Increasing effective eGovernment means that services are designed around users' needs and provide flexible and personalised ways of interacting and performing transactions with public administrations. For example, to track allocation of allowances or benefits, enrol in schools or universities, request and receive online civil certificates, submit online tax declarations. In addition, the usability of and access to eGovernment services should be improved by delivering eGovernment services via multiple channels (including Internet, TV, telephone, mobile devices, or where appropriate through intermediaries).

2011-2013	<p>The Commission will support Member States in developing eGovernment services designed around user needs and in ensuring inclusiveness and accessibility by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– agreeing common targets and evaluation criteria with the Member States,</li> <li>– organising exchanges of valuable expertise at national, regional or local level to support additional take-up,</li> <li>– supporting effective and concrete accessibility solutions, compliant with relevant European and international standards when available, through demonstration</li> </ul>
2013	<p>Member States will develop personalised online services, including functions such as monitoring the progress of transactions with public administrations.</p>

### 2.1.2. Collaborative Production of Services

Social networking and collaborative tools (e.g. Web 2.0 technologies) enable users to play an active role in the design and production of public services. Though still small, there are a growing number of services targeted at the needs of citizens, often developed by civil society organisations which are based on the effective collaboration between the private and the public sector<sup>15</sup>. However, it needs to be explored which are the most suitable tools and how best to apply these to effectively engage businesses, civil society and individual citizens.

In a first step, it is needed to undertake an analysis of ICT-based collaborative production techniques and of their cost effectiveness and ability to deliver high quality and reliable public services. With this knowledge the aim should be to engage third parties in developing services.

2011	Based on a study, the Commission will first assess how to involve users actively in design and production of eGovernment services and further elaborate recommendations / guidelines with and for the Member States.
2011-2013	The Commission will facilitate exchanges of knowledge and experience between stakeholders, and, agree with Member States on common targets for the roll out collaborative services.

### 2.1.3. Re-use of Public Sector Information

The public sector holds a gold mine of information<sup>16</sup>. Much of data that public authorities gather are not used or serve only a limited purpose. The release of non personal public data (geographical, demographic, statistical, environmental data etc...) in particular when provided in a machine readable format allows citizens, and businesses to find new ways to use it and to create new innovative products and services.

The Commission and Member States are committed to maximising the value of re-use of public sector information (PSI), e.g. by making raw data and documents available for re-use in a wide variety of formats (including machine-readable ones) and languages and by setting up PSI portals<sup>17</sup>. Actions in this area will be linked to the implementation and review of the Directive on the re-use of public sector information (the PSI Directive)<sup>18</sup>, the review of the Commission Decision on the re-use of Commission information<sup>19</sup> and efficient cooperation in the PSI Group<sup>20</sup>.

2011	Member States will agree on a common set of PSI re-use indicators.
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<sup>15</sup> E.g. fixmystreet.com

<sup>16</sup> The Commission and MS have acknowledged this value for many years and have adopted the Directive on the re-use of public sector information (the PSI Directive).

<sup>17</sup> E.g. Data.gov.uk

<sup>18</sup> Directive 2003/98/EC on the re-use of public sector information of 17.11.2003, OJ L345, 31.12.2003, p. 90-96

<sup>19</sup> Commission Decision 2006/291/EC on the re-use of Commission information of 07.04.2006

<sup>20</sup> The PSI Group consists of officials from Member State, local or regional authorities and representatives from private sector organisations who meet regularly to exchange good practices on PSI re-use and initiatives supporting PSI re-use and discuss practical issues regarding transposition of the PSI Directive.

2011	The Commission will conduct a study to assess to what extent open data catalogues and/or PSI portals (e.g. data.gov.uk) have been developed and implemented by Member States.
2011-2013	The Commission will facilitate exchanges of good practice and awareness-raising activities and will adopt its own internal PSI re-use strategy based on a review of the PSI Decision.
2011-2012	The Commission will review the PSI Directive, as indicated in the Digital Agenda for Europe, and will consider the possibility of an extended strategy for European PSI.

#### 2.1.4. *Improvement of Transparency*

Transparency in government decision making and in its use of personal data help to build the trust of citizens and improve accountability of policy makers. Although many Member States have set transparency goals, no common European objectives exist yet.

Surveys show that new technologies and services allowing users to trace their personal data stored by public administrations, enabling users to check who accessed their administrative files and giving users insight in the process of decision making are featuring amongst the most demanded eGovernment services. Action in this field should be in accordance with the Data Protection Directive (Directive 95/46/EC).

2011	The Commission and Member States will set common voluntary transparency targets and exchange available experiences.
2013	Member States and the Commission will provide online access to information on government laws and regulations, policies and finance.
2014	In accordance with Data Protection Directive 95/46/EC, Member States will enable citizens to have electronic access to those personal data that are held on them when available electronically and will inform them electronically whenever such data are being processed by automatic means, in a simple and unambiguous manner.

#### 2.1.5. *Involvement of citizens and businesses in policy-making processes*

Member States are committed to developing and promoting more useful and better ways, relying on ICT solutions, for businesses and citizens to participate in public policy consultations, debates and policy-making processes. New tools for governance and policy modelling, currently being developed under the seventh EU Framework Programme for research, technological development and demonstration activities (FP7)<sup>21</sup>, will support governments in delivering smarter, targeted and adaptive policies, whilst better understanding cost-effectiveness and impacts.

<sup>21</sup> Seventh EU Framework Programme for research, technological development and demonstration activities (FP 7)  
[http://ec.europa.eu/information\\_society/activities/egovernment/research/fp7/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/egovernment/research/fp7/index_en.htm)

The envisaged actions will improve the ability of people to have their voice heard and make suggestions for policy actions in the Member States and the European Union as a whole. These actions will build on projects on eParticipation already launched under the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP), e.g. by using e-Petitioning ICT tools to support 'citizens initiatives'<sup>22</sup>, or on new calls for proposals to be opened under the seventh EU Framework Programme (FP7).

2011	The Commission will collaborate with Member States on developing the electronic service to support 'citizens initiatives' (as foreseen by Art. 11 of the Treaty on European Union).
2011	The Commission will assess existing research projects and launch new ones under the 'ICT for Governance and Policy Modelling' objective of the 2011-2012 FP7 Work Programme and ensure further exchanges of knowledge and best practice.
2011-2015	Member States, the Commission and other representative institutions such as parliaments should develop services that involve stakeholders in public debates and decision-making processes building on pilots and demonstration.

## 2.2. Internal Market

Most public online services do not work across borders or involve cumbersome procedures to be accessible. People from one EU country cannot easily apply for public services in another country than the one in which they are established, using for instance national electronic identity cards. This seriously reduces the mobility of businesses and citizens. To support the Internal Market, governments should develop 'seamless' services for entrepreneurs to set up and run a business anywhere in Europe and allowing individuals to study, work, reside, receive health care and retire anywhere in the European Union.

### 2.2.1. Seamless Services for Businesses

Businesses should be able to sell and provide services and products all across the EU, through easy electronic public procurement and the effective implementation of the Services offering single points of contact to businesses for their interactions with government. Two major initiatives have been set up in both areas over the last two years:

- SPOCS "Simple Procedures Online for Cross-border Services"<sup>23</sup> aims at removing the administrative barriers that European business face when wanting to offer their services abroad, by supporting the implementation of next generation points of single contact and the associated eProcedures.
- PEPPOL "Pan-European Public eProcurement On-Line"<sup>24</sup> aims to pilot an EU-wide interoperable public eProcurement solution allowing entrepreneurs to perform the full public procurement cycle online, from ordering to invoicing and access to catalogues. This will reduce administrative burden; increased transparency and potentially large save costs savings are the expected gains from such implementation.

<sup>22</sup> Art. 11 of the Treaty on European Union and Art. 24 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union

<sup>23</sup> SPOCS (Simple Procedures Online for Cross-border Services) (<http://www.eu-spocs.eu>).

<sup>24</sup> PEPPOL (Pan-European Public Procurement Online) (<http://www.peppol.eu>).

Based on the results of the above initiatives, the envisaged actions should be: a cross-border and interoperable eProcurement infrastructure based on the results of the PEPPOL large scale pilot; and the development of a ‘second generation’ of points of single contact along with an extension of the Services Directive to other areas of business. This would mean that by 2015 businesses in Europe will be able to sell goods and provide services to public administrations in other countries just as easily as they currently do to those in their home country. Expanding a business into other countries and registering can be done remotely – i.e. without leaving the office.

2011	Member States and the Commission will assess outcomes of PEPPOL and SPOCS and ensure sustainable follow up.
2011	The Commission will issue a White Paper on practical steps to inter-connect eProcurement capacity across the internal market <sup>25</sup> .
2012-2014	Member States should roll out cross-border services based on the results of PEPPOL and SPOCS.
2013	Member States will ensure that a ‘second generation’ of points of single contact will function as fully fledged eGovernment centres beyond the requirements and areas covered by the Services Directive. <sup>26</sup>

### 2.2.2. *Personal Mobility*

Citizens of Europe should be able to move and reside freely across Europe<sup>27</sup>. In this area Member States and the Commission will work together to develop services for increasing the mobility of people who want to move between European countries for e.g. study, work, health care, residence and/or retirement.

The envisaged actions should ensure the development of interoperable services enabling citizens to communicate, perform transactions, and send and receive electronic documents and information to and from public administrations across the EU. These will allow for delivering secure cross-border exchange and safe storage of electronic information (eDelivery of documents and information). People shall be able to access personal documents such as birth certificates from all over Europe, be eligible for and receive pension rights when retiring in another country than the one where they worked, or electronically enrol in any European university.

2012-2014	The Commission will support exchanges of best practice and coordinate the efforts of Member States to jointly develop and set up interoperable eDelivery services.
2015	Member States will provide cross-border and interoperable eDelivery services for citizens, e.g. so that they can study, work, reside, receive health care and retire anywhere in the European Union.

<sup>25</sup> This action is defined in the Digital Agenda for Europe

<sup>26</sup> This action is defined in the Digital Agenda for Europe

<sup>27</sup> Implementing of the Directive on the right of citizens of the Union to move and reside freely within its territory and on the right to free movement of persons.

### 2.2.3. EU-wide implementation of cross-border services

The Commission and the Member States will jointly share results on successful experiences gained in the large-scale pilot projects<sup>28</sup> to determine and agree on key cross-border services ready for sustainable implementation throughout the EU. Member States and the Commission will assess their readiness by analysing the organisational, legal, technical and semantic barriers that could hinder their definitive deployment.

The availability of cross-border services in the EU will be increased, initially, through support to new large-scale pilots based on well-defined needs (e.g. in the areas like eJustice or eEnvironment), and on the opportunities for re-use of existing infrastructures. The envisaged actions should provide the prerequisites for the Member States to engage in full deployment throughout the EU of cross-border services and start new ones.

2011	The Commission will conduct a study with the Member States, of the demand for cross-border services and assess the organisational, legal, technical and semantic barriers.
2011	Member States will agree on a number of key cross-border public services to be rolled out between 2012 and 2015 and will identify appropriate life events/stages <sup>29</sup> .
2012-2015	The Commission will support and coordinate the efforts of Member States to roll out Large Scale Pilot projects and to start new ones, while encouraging coordination and re-use of results and solutions between them.
2012-2015	The Commission will work with Member States and stakeholders to implement cross-border eEnvironment services <sup>30</sup> .

## 2.3. Efficiency and Effectiveness of Governments and Administrations

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

### 2.3.1. Improving Organisational Processes

eGovernment serves as an instrument of change to improve organisational processes in administrations and limiting cost. For example, the cost of invoicing can be decreased in electronic public procurement processes, while increasing effectiveness, for example through faster processing. Civil servants will benefit from enhancing their eSkills and from learning from experiences in other parts of Europe on ways to improve organisational processes. The ePractice.eu portal will play a pivotal role in this.

<sup>28</sup> STORK (Secure identiTy acrOss boRders linKed) (<https://www.eid-stork.eu/>). epSOS (Smart Open Services for European Patients) (<http://www.epsos.eu>).

<sup>29</sup> This action is defined in the Digital Agenda for Europe.

<sup>30</sup> This action is defined in the Digital Agenda for Europe.

In addition, the Commission will lead by example and apply state-of-the-art and most suitable eGovernment technologies and policies within its own organisation. The eCommission 2011-2015 Action Plan will support streamlined administrative processes, facilitate information-sharing and simplify interaction with the Commission.

2011	The Commission will facilitate the exchange of experience, encouraging re-use of successful solutions and applications and exploring new approaches to support the Member States in improving organisational processes.
2011-2012	The Commission will transform the ePractice.eu portal into an effective experience exchange and information tool for Member States' eGovernment practitioners
2011-2015	The Commission will implement an ambitious eCommission Action Plan for 2011-2015, including full electronic procurement, a public sector information strategy and a transparency policy <sup>31</sup> .
2013	The Commission, in close cooperation with Member States, will set up a programme for staff exchanges between administrations in different Member States.

### 2.3.2. *Reduction of Administrative Burdens*

For many people and businesses the best government is one that goes unnoticed. In practice however, many procedures and requirements make interactions with governments burdensome in terms of time and resources. Therefore simplification or elimination of administrative processes should be an important objective, as laid out in the Action Programme for reducing administrative burdens in the European Union<sup>32</sup>.

The envisaged actions should help Member States eliminating unnecessary administrative burdens. This can be achieved, e.g. through smart use by public authorities of citizens' available information and by applying the principle of 'once-only' registration of data whereby the information needed from citizens is only collected once, on condition that data and privacy protection requirements are met.

2011-2013	The Commission will organise with Member States the sharing of experiences on the implementation of the 'once-only' registration principle and, on electronic procedures and communications having become a dominant channel for delivering eGovernment services, conduct a cost-benefit analysis and design a roadmap for further implementation.
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### 2.3.3. *Green Government*

The Commission Recommendation on mobilising information and communications technologies to facilitate the transition to an energy-efficient, low-carbon economy includes public organisations<sup>33</sup>. Specific targets relating to eGovernment are missing and need to be set and assessed.

<sup>31</sup> This action is defined in the Digital Agenda for Europe.

<sup>32</sup> COM(2007) 23.

<sup>33</sup> COM(2009) 111.

The envisaged actions described below will aim to reduce the carbon footprint of administrations in Member States, for example by implementing electronic archiving, using videoconferences instead of travelling, etc.

2012	The Commission will conduct a study on the potential of eGovernment to reducing carbon footprint of governments including best practices.
2013	Member States should develop and agree indicators and evaluation procedures for measuring the reduction of the carbon footprint of their administrations as a result of eGovernment services.

## 2.4. Pre-conditions for developing eGovernment

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

### 2.4.1. Open Specifications and Interoperability

Interoperability is the ability of systems and machines to exchange, process and correctly interpret information. It is more than just a technical challenge, as it also involves legal, organisational and semantic aspects of handling data. Interoperability is an essential pre-condition for open, flexible delivery of eGovernment services and will enable collaboration between administrations in Europe. In particular, standards and open platforms offer opportunities for more cost-effective use of resources and delivery of services.

The envisaged actions will lead to develop a common strategy for achieving interoperability between Member States at European level.

2011-2015	The Commission (via the ISA programme) will implement activities to put into action the European Interoperability Framework (EIF) and the European Interoperability Strategy (EIS) (adoption of the EIF and EIS expected in 2010).
2012	The Commission will organise exchanges of expertise and promote the re-use and sharing of solutions to implement interoperable eGovernment services. This includes establishment of interfaces to gain access to and use authentic national sources.
2013	Member States should have aligned their national interoperability frameworks to the EIF <sup>34</sup> .

<sup>34</sup> This action is defined in the Digital Agenda for Europe.

### 2.4.2. Key Enablers

For many online services it is essential to identify and authenticate the person or legal entity to whom/which a service will be delivered. Electronic identification (eID) technologies and authentication services are essential for the security of electronic transactions (in both the public and private sectors). Today the most common way to authenticate is by means of passwords, but more secure solutions protecting privacy are increasingly needed. Europe needs better administrative cooperation to develop and deploy cross-border public online services, including practical eIdentification and eAuthentication solutions. Initiatives have already been started such as the STORK Large Scale Pilot which aims to establish a European eID Interoperability Platform that will allow citizens to access eGovernment services inside and outside their home country by using their national eID.

The envisaged actions will contribute to build a Pan-European framework for mutually recognised eID<sup>35</sup>, allowing citizens and businesses to identify themselves electronically throughout Europe. The approach should build on the results of the above initiatives, in particular STORK, relying on authenticated identities, compliant with data and privacy protection provisions. This work will complement and take into account the existing European Action Plan for eSignatures and eIdentification<sup>36</sup> and the revision of the eSignature Directive planned in 2011.

2011	The Commission will propose a revision of the eSignature Directive with a view to providing a legal framework for cross-border recognition and interoperability of secure eAuthentication systems <sup>37</sup> .
2012	The Commission will propose a Council and European Parliament Decision to ensure mutual recognition of eIdentification and eAuthentication across the EU, based on online ‘authentication services’ to be offered in all Member States (which may use the most appropriate official identification documents — issued by the public and private sectors) <sup>38</sup> .
2012-2014	Member States should apply and roll out the eID solutions, based on the results of STORK and other eID-related projects.

### 2.4.3. Innovative eGovernment

The new generation of eGovernment services will need to rely on and benefit from innovative technical approaches, such as clouds of public services and service-oriented architecture (SOA) to build open, flexible and collaborative eGovernment services while at the same time lowering ICT costs. To promote the availability and use of convenient, on-demand access to shared resources and services for the provision of eGovernment services pilot projects will be launched. In addition, administrations will need to take action to upgrade IPv6-relevant eGovernment infrastructure (portals, websites, applications, etc.) and online services of public interest, in view of the depletion of IPv4 addresses. This take-up of IPv6 will be beneficial for

<sup>35</sup> This action is defined in the Digital Agenda for Europe.

<sup>36</sup> COM(2008) 798.

<sup>37</sup> This action is defined in the Digital Agenda for Europe.

<sup>38</sup> This action is defined in the Digital Agenda for Europe.

public authorities in Member States to foster innovative, efficient and accessible applications and services<sup>39</sup>.

The envisaged actions aim to identify and disseminate tested and safe solutions for clouds of public services, SOA and transition strategies for converting from IPv4 to IPv6.

2011	The Commission will launch a study and recommend action on how to apply emerging technologies and paradigms (such as SOA and clouds of public services) in the public sector.
2011	The Commission will launch activities under the CIP programme to support administrations to pilot the upgrade to IPv6, thereby creating showcases and new momentum for moving to IPv6 on a large scale.
2012	The Commission will launch pilot projects to demonstrate how public administrations can deliver eGovernment services in a more flexible and efficient way by using innovative architecture and technologies.

### 3. GOVERNANCE

Member States are fully committed to the political priorities of the Malmö Declaration. They also invited the European Commission to organise joint governance of this Action Plan allowing active participation by the Member States in implementing it.

To this end, the European Commission will set up and chair a High-Level Expert Group of Member States' representatives responsible for the national eGovernment strategies. This High-Level Expert Group will inform the High-Level Group for the Digital Agenda and will coordinate with the ISA Programme Committee. Additional cooperation will also be encouraged.

A coherent framework needs to be set up to discuss policies, monitor and evaluate the Action Plan and exchange experience. A mid-term evaluation of implementation of this Action Plan will be conducted in 2013. This will examine the extent to which the objectives of the Action Plan have been achieved, the progress made and the difficulties encountered. Depending on the results of the mid-term evaluation, any necessary adjustments to the objectives and activities of the Action Plan will be reviewed with the proposed High-Level Expert Group.

The overall progress made on the Action Plan and on eGovernment in general will be measured annually, using an appropriate mix of instruments (benchmarking, bench-learning, self-assessment, etc.) and methods (web research, public data analysis, user testing, interviews, etc.). Member States will share relevant benchmarking initiatives with the European Commission and other Member States in order to allow development of common measurement exercises among interested parties.

2011	The Commission will establish a High-Level Expert Group of Member States' representatives and will suggest an appropriate mandate.
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<sup>39</sup> In line with COM(2008) 313, the Commission will prepare a Staff Working Paper in 2011 identifying any follow-up action required.

2012	Member States will inform the Commission and the High-Level Expert Group how the political priorities of the Malmö Ministerial Declaration have been or will be reflected in their national eGovernment strategies.
2013	All Member States will have incorporated the political priorities of the Malmö Declaration in their national strategies.
2013	The eGovernment Action Plan will be evaluated and the findings used to update the Action Plan.
2015	All Member States will inform the Commission and the High-Level Expert Group how the political priorities of the Malmö Declaration have been achieved.



