Competitiveness and Innovation Programme (CIP)
ICT Policy Support Programme (ICT-PSP)

CIP ICT-PSP Interim Evaluation
Panel Report

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Interim evaluation of the CIP ICT PSP

Introduction

This evaluation of the Information and Communication Technologies Policy Support Programme (ICT PSP) has been conducted by a panel of five experts:

- Prof Gerard Pogorel (Chair), Professor of Economics and Management, Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Télécommunications, (ENST-Telecom ParisTech), France.
- Dana Berova, Gartner, Czech Republic.
- Prof Slavo Radosevic, Professor of Industry and Innovation Studies, University College London.
- Eppie Eloranta, Director of TIEKE, the Finnish Information Society Development Centre.
- Jeremy Harrison (Rapporteur), Director of abdi Ltd, UK partners of the ROI Institute

The panel's terms of reference included a lengthy list of indicative evaluation questions. These are recorded in the annex 4. The panel reviewed these and focused its discussions and enquiries on eight topics best suited to collecting evidence for an interim report:

1. The projects and the EU's objectives (Visibility of EU strategies in the programme and the retained projects, How projects reflect the policy objectives, The stakeholders understanding of the policy background, Project workplans – their conformity with policy guidelines)
2. Appropriateness of the instruments to the tasks
3. The implementation and working of the programme
4. Interoperability (Pilot A)
5. Innovation (Pilot B)
6. Sharing of best practice (Networks)
7. Leveraging
8. Interactions with other DGs and their programmes
9. Effectiveness of the programme in promoting sustainability, innovation and competitiveness

The work was organised as follows.

- There were four meetings under the chairmanship of Prof Pogorel between September 2008 and April 2009, and three further telephone conferences.
- Panel members familiarised themselves with the documentation preceding and constituting the legal decisions establishing the programme.
- Panel members supported this reading by reviewing materials relating to i2010 strategy, and the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP).
- Panel members reviewed the Pilot A and B Projects retained for funding, and the Thematic Networks, and each member undertook to analyse them and report to the Panel from specific perspectives.
- The Panel received both written and oral evidence from Eureval, which had been contracted by the Commission to conduct a study (completed in January 2009) on the effectiveness of the implementation of the programme instruments and the likelihood of the programme generating the broader impacts targeted by the Commission.
- The Panel also received written evidence from the Commission services in the form of a self-assessment conducted by the Commission services responsible for the design and administration of ICT PSP, DG INFSO, completed in January 2009.

- The panel has also conducted interviews with selected National Contact Points.

For the purpose of reporting, the Panel has concentrated on organising its evidence and comments in respect of the following key considerations

- **relevance** to the needs and problems identified by the programme and **utility** in meeting them (section 2)
- **efficiency** in their operation and in their use of resources and **effectiveness** in engaging organisations which can met the objectives of the programme, or show reasonable likelihood of being so at the time of evaluation (sections 3 and 4); and
- likelihood of their generating the broader **impacts** on society looked for by the programme (section 5).

1. Creating the conditions for impact

1.1 ICT PSP

ICT PSP was established alongside The Entrepreneurship and Innovation Programme (EIP) and The Intelligent Energy-Europe Programme (IEE) and in support of:

- the i2010 strategy, which has the aim of establishing a single market for the digital economy, of reinforcing innovation and ICT research and of promoting improvements in inclusion, public services and quality of life.
- the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP), of which it is a part.

The ICT PSP is concerned with the networks, policies and practical issues crucial to the deployment of information and communication technologies. Unlike the 7th Framework Programme (FP7), which is about R&D generated new knowledge and innovation, the principal concern of ICT PSP is to stimulate a wide uptake of innovative ICT-based solutions and applications. It is focused on a wide range of economic and social contexts where the quality and appropriateness of ICT are critical to the achievement of social and economic goals. Interoperability is one of the key factors in this process. This was a complex brief, and overall the panel took the view that the Commission had done a good job in launching the Programme and supporting its initial phases.

1.2 Instruments

This approach has been designed to foster and support the building of partnerships and consensus. Its instruments are:
- Pilot A Projects, which attract EU support of up to €10M, are intended to build on Member State initiatives, and have interoperability as a central theme;
- Pilot B Projects, which attract EU support of up to €3M, are designed to provide a context in which interoperable solutions can achieve their initial implementation, and are designed to pilot and test innovative ICT solutions in real situations with a view to wider deployment;
- Thematic Networks which attract EU support of up to €0.5M, and are aimed at enabling a range of relevant stakeholders to communicate and network on a given theme.

In the 2009 Work Programme, Best Practice Networks and a number of new themes were added to the programme.

1.3 Addressing systemic deployment problems

The problems surrounding ICT deployment are largely systemic. For this reason ICT PSP, though with a strong technical orientation, has been focused strongly on organisational, institutional, and legal issues. Its projects and networks have been concerned with improving coordination between different institutional levels, and with securing the advances in interoperability that this brings.

1.4 Objectives

ICT PSP, which runs to 2013, has a budget of €730M (amounting to some 50% funding) . It targets activities addressing innovative services in areas of general interest and therefore public authorities are involved as stakeholders and/or end users. It also aims at supporting the

validation of innovative services based on technical solutions that can emerge from research activities and can be provided by SMEs. Those solutions should be mature enough for being tested in real settings and should have good short and medium term prospects.

The programme's objectives embrace the promotion of greater uptake and wider use of ICT by businesses, governments and citizens.
In its 2007 Work programme, ICT PSP has focused on:
- Efficient and interoperable eGovernment services,
- ICT for accessibility, ageing and social integration,
- ICT for sustainable and interoperable health services,

In its 2008 Work programme, ICT PSP has focused on:
- ICT for user-friendly administrations, public services and inclusion,
- ICT for energy efficiency and sustainability in urban areas

There is some intentional overlap between these themes.

1.5 The need for indicators

The breadth of policy and practice covered by these themes and their accompanying target objectives will present challenges to those evaluating the eventual impact of ICT PSP.

The Commission's award criteria for Pilot A and B projects, and for Thematic Networks provide a basis on which clear impact indicators can be developed:

- the achievement of viability, sustainability and scalability beyond the phases of work undertaken through ICT PSP;

- securing the support of public bodies and developing the capacity to build support and consensus across the EU;

- ensuring the free availability of innovations achieved so creating the necessary components and building blocks for interoperability;

- assuring the openness of the networks towards relevant outside organizations.

But these are in themselves no more than very broad indicators. Only the projects and networks themselves are in a position to build these into indicators capable of being tracked throughout the life of their work.

> **Recommendation 1 - The need to clarify and embed project-level indicators**
> The EC should give the project applicants themselves the responsibility for framing specific indicators through which their delivery of impact in relation to ICT PSP's objectives can be tracked. These should be quantitative as well as qualitative, and time-based. They need to be accompanied by indications of when they will be monitored and reported, and of who carries the responsibility to do this. Only then will these become useful instruments.

They should be required to propose these in their applications, and their contracts with ICT PSP should record specific agreements on their tracking and reporting. This must certainly include interim and final reports, and might usefully include certain indicators being reported to the Commission on a three or six month basis. The agreement between the projects and networks and the Commission should make this reporting obligatory, and in return the Commission should commit to confining its demands only to information for which it has a specific use.

2 The ICT PSP's utility and relevance to delivery of EU objectives

2.1 The calls for projects

The Commission's self assessment accepted that in the first ICT PSP call for projects the documentation was to some degree repetitive and too long. This resulted in some overlong proposals, and may have deterred some organizations from participating. Evidence from Eureval confirmed that some participants indicated that they had difficulty understanding ICT PSP's aims and objectives and its relationship to other initiatives. The structure of the documentation itself may have prompted some applicants to produce unnecessarily lengthy and repetitive proposals.

In the main, however, these deficiencies have already been recognized and corrected. There is no suggestion that they resulted in any failure to attract suitable applications. The Commission's themes and policy objectives set out in the Work Programmes and the Implementation Plans for 2007 and 2008 were well-covered in the applications, and in the projects that received funding.

2.2 Delivery of EU objectives

In its own self-assessment the Commission drew attention to the fact that ICT PSP's key objective of 'the emphasis on engagement with citizens, or end-users, is clear, something which is very much in line with i2010'second pillar, strengthening innovation and investment in ICT research'. It is of course equally aligned to the first objective of creating a Single European Information Space, and to the third of supporting inclusion, better public services and quality of life through the use of ICT.

This is correct, but the Panel feels that active deployment of new technologies is the means by which end-users become engaged, not from the fact that these technologies may in themselves be innovative. It is not yet clear to what extent ICT PSP is encouraging or facilitating this engagement with end users.

Furthermore, where ICT PSP addresses objectives with both economic and social aspects (i.e. in giving priority to inclusion), it is not always clear which of them is meant to be primary and which secondary.

2.3 Business and social solutions

This issue has raised some concern within the panel about a possible overlap with the IDABC Programme (Interoperable Delivery of European eGovernment Services to public Administrations, Business and Citizens), which is also focused on encouraging and supporting the delivery of cross-border public sector services to citizens and enterprises in Europe, improving efficiency and collaboration between European public administrations and contributing to making Europe an attractive place to live, work and invest.

ICT PSP's linking of business and social solutions to economic objectives call to mind an important point made in the report *Information Society Research and Innovation*[1] delivered in 2008 by the panel chaired by Mr. Esko Aho. It suggested that there is currently insufficient linkage between RTD and venture capital. It is not the business of ICT PSP to pick this issue up directly, but the panel feels that the EC will ultimately need to be able to show how far it has been effective on focusing the programme on innovations that prove to be truly marketable.

2.4 Project/ budget balance

The Panel has been conscious of the broad scope of ICT PSP's objectives and policy targets in relation to its budget. This has resulted in projects and networks being spread quite thinly across its thematic priorities. Especially in addressing the complex issues of cross-border activity, regulation and interoperability of public and private services, ICT PSP projects' size may prove to be too modest to achieve any identifiable, general impact. But the concern has also been voiced that more money should have been allocated to work involving SMEs. This kind of dilemma illustrates the complexity of aspirations and expectations surrounding ICT PSP and its desired impact.

> **Recommendation 2 – a better balance between objectives and budget**
> The Commission needs to ensure that ICT PSP achieves a practical balance between its objectives, themes, and areas of activity and the available budget. We recommend that in future the number of themes and activities should be limited to ensure that each one can be represented by a more significant body of work than is currently the case. This would improve the visibility of ICT PSP's work on its selected themes and priorities, and would as a result offer a better prospect of significant policy impact.

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[1] "Ex-post Evaluation of the ICT theme of the 6th FP for RTD"

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/information_society/evaluation/data/pdf/fp6_ict_expost/ist-fp6_panel_report.pdf

3 The ICT PSP instruments

The panel believes that the mix of projects and Thematic Networks that have been funded have the potential to go some way towards meeting the Programme's innovation and dissemination objectives.

3.1 Pilot A – an efficient model

Overall the Eureval Study has confirmed that the Pilot A project model has seemed efficient, and there is satisfaction with the overall quality of the projects selected. Their work is clearly focused on the key objective of supporting interoperability.

At a deeper level, the panel has been concerned with whether the means by which Pilot A projects have been selected has offered the very best prospects for success. Numbers of applications have been small, as the EC intended. The large budgets and the need for 50% matching contributions may also have deterred a number of potential partners. But the panel would like to see more clarity about the strategy behind these selections.

The EC has made it clear that it operates a top-down approach to generating Pilot A projects. It observes and notes social and market developments, and the development of Member State policies, and then encourages proposals. This approach is appropriate in cases where there are no competing technical solutions and deployment is the sole objective.

But where there are still competing technical solutions, projects should be concerned more with proof of concept, and in these cases project selection needs to be bottom-up and competitive. If not, the EC stands in danger of having put substantial resources into deployment that is likely to be partial or failed.

The panel believes that the Commission needs to provide more detailed justification to enable policymakers to be sure that its Pilot A strategies have in all cases resulted in the right projects being supported

3.2 Pilot B – a budget spread too thinly

Participants have expressed a good level of satisfaction with the Pilot B instrument to the Eureval Study. Here budgets are relatively modest, and the ICT PSP budget is spread thinly across its priorities. Projects range from those concerned with ageing to those addressing energy efficiency for housing and intelligent cars. The Commission argues that these issues are not well-covered in other programmes, and should be picked up by ICT PSP.

The validity of this approach rests almost wholly on the capacity of relatively small and isolated projects or groups of projects to attract the interest and respect of other policymakers and practitioners. At present there is no evidence that this is the case, and the panel takes the view that it is unlikely to prove to be so.

> **Recommendation 3 – a better concentration of Pilot B projects on chosen themes**
> We recommend that in future the Commission should limit the numbers of themes for Pilot B projects to ensure that there is a better critical mass of projects on the themes which are considered to be of the highest priority. This will ensure that sufficient experience and innovation to attract the sustained interest of policymakers and major

deploying organizations are associated with each theme. A guideline might be that each theme should be populated by a minimum of five Pilot B Projects, and that coverage of Member States should be guaranteed by better links to relevant Thematic Networks.

3.3 Thematic Networks – need for changes

The panel has doubts about the appropriateness as presently structured of the Thematic Networks.

We have learnt via the Eureval Study and from some NCPs that some organizations involved in them have been disappointed in the small amounts of funding available to partners other than those responsible for co-ordinating networks. There certainly seem to have been cases where organizations entering Thematic Networks expected to be able to use them for the kind of developmental activity possible in projects.

This was clearly a misconception, but we suggest that the Thematic Networks be encouraged to accommodate the idea behind it.

Recommendation 4 – Closely linking Thematic Networks to Pilot Projects
The Thematic Networks can be strongly reinforced by closer links with relevant ICT PSP Pilot projects. We recommend that in future calls for applications for Thematic Networks promoters should be required either to show how their actions could lead to future A or B pilots, or to build in some cross membership and interlinked work with relevant existing Pilot B (and where appropriate Pilot A) projects. They should also be required to reference at least one link with a previous or existing ICT PSP project or network, or with a relevant project from another programme or initiative (e.g. Structural Funds). They should then be encouraged to form further links with any other Pilot B projects funded in the call under which they have been approved.

3.4 Three further issues

Three further issues have been raised from the evidence collected by Eureval, and in the Commission self-assessment. These are not universally shared, but they should be noted.

- It was suggested in an oral presentation from Eureval that the design of the instruments and the support provided for project applicants made them more appropriate to the less experienced participants than to those with more experience of working in other programmes. No fully persuasive explanation has been provided for this, but the Commission will, no doubt inquire further and embody any lessons in future support materials.

- Some also feel that the instruments as a whole are better adapted to be used by academic organizations and public bodies than to the needs of companies, especially SMEs, and other kinds of organizations.

- Some NCPs have expressed doubts about the efficacy of a single grant agreement model for instruments as different from each other as Pilot A and B projects and Thematic Networks.

Concerns about the attractiveness of funding programmes to SMEs have been reflected in the Eureval Study, and in remarks made by NCPs to Panel members. We have noted, however, that in the second ICT PSP call for projects 35% of applicants were SMEs, and that in the first and second calls for projects more than 30% of the participants in selected proposals were SMEs This seems quite creditable.

4 ICT PSP Implementation (efficiency and effectiveness)

4.1 Policy links

The panel acknowledges that the Commission has made considerable efforts to ensure that ICT PSP is transparent to those best placed to enable it to achieve its policy objectives. It simplified the documentation and the application process as compared to both FP6 and FP7. It established National Contact Points in each Member State to assist potential applicants.

Applicants (both those who were funded, and those who were not) have confirmed that the information provided enabled them to take full advantage of the opportunity. This was especially true for those approaching a Commission funding programme for the first time.

4.2 First two calls for proposals

The Commission self-assessment has shown that the first two calls for proposals resulted in applications exceeding the available budget by a factor of three. The response from Pilot B applicants was high in both calls.

The selection process in the first Call was carried out efficiently and with minimal delays. Initial delays further down the line in the grant contract negotiation process were in part due to technical bugs in new IT tools, and to the challenges experienced by both beneficiaries and the Commission services themselves as they familiarized themselves with the programme's rules and guidelines.

4.3 Positive outcomes

The Eureval study identified a number of positive facts from these first two calls for projects:

- partnerships have been more diverse than in previous programmes;
- relationships developed in order to make applications are reported to have survived even when proposals have not been retained;
- more than 70% of partners felt the ICT PSP framework had contributed to a better design of their project;
- 50% confirmed that ICT PSP has raised their awareness of ICT-based innovative solutions, use of ICT to tackle thematic issues and interoperability of services;
- respondents who consider their ICT skills were not very good before say that thanks to the project, their capacities to manage ICT-related issues have improved (or are likely to);
- more than 60% of respondents anticipate some increase in their level of financial effort on ICT-related issues.

5. The overall Impact of ICT PSP

5.1 Potential for impact

It is too early to comment on ICT PSP's effectiveness. Our concern is first whether ICT PSP's structure and content offer a basis for achieving its impact, and second whether there is a methodology for tracking and disseminating impact in place.

We are confident that, broadly, the basis for achieving impact is in place, but there are significant respects in which ICT PSP can and should be improved.

We are not convinced about the prospects for tracking and disseminating impact. We have already referred to the need to develop better and more relevant indicators alongside ICT PSP's objectives, and to give the funded projects and networks clear responsibility for reporting on them. The other pressing issue is the capacity to use ICT PSP experience and models to leverage adoption through other policy structures and programmes.

5.2 Leveraging is the key to impact

The Commission has made it clear that it took a conscious decision to deploy a wide range of objectives for ICT PSP, accepting that the available funding would limit the coverage of each one. The intention was that the programme's broader objectives should be realized by leveraging its ideas, products and partnerships into other policies and programmes.

This is easier to promote as an idea than it is to achieve. At this relatively early stage in the programme there is no evidence that the conditions for successful leverage are in place.

On the positive side:

- some 43 participants in FP6 are or have been involved as partners in ICT PSP – both current and past FP partners offer potential for leverage via their wider R&D partnerships, and this should be exploited actively;
- case studies of projects have revealed plans to leverage on national and private funds, but so far there have been no significant results (the main evidence of financial leverage has been within projects themselves as some partners have responded to funding shortfalls by increasing their own financial commitments).

On the other hand:

- contacts with some of the National Contact Points (charged with supporting applicants) showed little evidence that they were either willing or able to promote involvement with other funding programmes with complementary objectives (e.g. the Structural Funds), or even that they were sufficiently informed about them to be in a position to offer any guidance to ICT PSP applicants;
- There is some regular participation in DG Regio and Committee of the Regions events, but there is no indication that this has amounted to a strategic approach at European Commission level to achieving leverage. Communication efforts between ICT PSP Projects and interested communities such as those applying

for structural funds should be strengthened. Collaboration between DG INFSO with other Commission services in particular those associated with the Structural funds should be reinforced.

Recommendation 5 – a concerted effort to lay the foundations for successful leveraging
Successful leveraging cannot happen unless it is actively prepared for and promoted at European, national and network levels. This work needs urgently to be set in hand by the Commission. We believe that this should involve immediate collaboration between DG INFSO and DG Regio in respect of the European Regional Fund, with a view at very least to establishing relationships and joint dissemination between projects with related objectives. Although it is much smaller in size, the European Social Fund also finances a wide range of activity involving ICT, and a great deal that addresses inclusion in respect of groups like older workers that are specifically targeted in ICT PSP, and others like ethnic minorities that are not. The potential for leverage through the European Social Fund should also be reviewed. The Commission should also review the present very limited capacity of the NCPs with a view to enabling them to establish working and dissemination contacts between ICT PSP networks and relevant national projects and initiatives.

5.3 The importance of underpinning deployment

Considering the extensive goals of ICT-PSP, and the pressing necessities of implementation of the i2010 initiative, it seems to the Panel that Programmes aiming at the deployment of ICT services should match in budget other large EC Programmes, and that the existing Commission programmes that support deployment are too limited in scale. The greater the volume of completed research from R&D projects that have reached maturity, the greater the need for parallel investment in projects and networks designed to identify opportunities for wide scale deployment and encourage the public sector in particular to exploit them.

Recommendation 6 – a larger budget after 2012/13
For significant work on deployment and interoperability, a successor programme will require a significantly larger budget. Pilot A projects or their equivalent will need to be larger. More Member States will need to be involved. Pilot B projects will need to be more numerous, providing critical mass of experience on selected themes, with Thematic Networks reinforcing the deployment effort. The credibility of this proposition will depend significantly on the success with which the current ICT PSP realizes, disseminates and leverages its work.

ANNEXES

Annex 1: Evaluation evidence on the response to ICT PSP from stakeholders and project promoters (drawn by the panel from the study conducted by Eureval in support of this evaluation).

The response to the ICT PSP

The first call attracted 1,017 applicant organizations that converted into 87 projects. Of these, 35 were assessed above the quality threshold, and 22 were funded and an indicative budget of some €54m was allocated.

They were distributed as follows.

	eGovernment	eInclusion	eHealth	Others	Total
Pilot A	2		1		3
Pilot B	2	6 *(5 in the Ageing Well theme)*			8
Pilot C	2	1	1	7 *(themes: SME sharing experience, sustainable growth, intelligent cars, privacy protection)*	11
	€24.3m	**€15.19m**	**€11.5m**	**€2.98**	**€53.97m**

Finally, four of its objectives (1.1, 1.2, 2.2 and 3.1) account for more than 80% of the call's
total budget, with more than EUR 10 M each20. By comparison, the average budget
for the other objectives is EUR 1.1 M.

This relative concentration of effort has clearly happened largely as a result of the constraints on the budget but the panel regards at as a largely welcome concentration of resources on more achievable objectives.
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Given the programme's focus on promoting interoperability, it was important to attract credible, experienced and well-positioned stakeholders to the programme.

The result was satisfactory in that amongst the retained projects there were
70 'very connected' organizations (experienced and with good links).

The objective of attracting a good proportion of public authorities capable of acting as convenors of projects and networks, and well-placed to provide co-ordination and networking, was met:
- 40% were public authorities,
- 25% were companies,
- 15% were academic organizations.

Further analysis illustrated both the strengths and limitations of the programme.

Some 30% of the participating organizations were new to ICT and R&D programmes, and most of the largest organizations involved in FP6 were absent, underling ICT PSP's distinctive role and objectives.

With ICT PSP's focus more on deployment than innovation, it is unsurprising that few of the 50 participating organizations also active in FP6, were, according to Eureval's analysis, not amongst those classified as 'very innovative'.

- Five of the most innovative companies in the world applied, and four were retained they are aware of the market potential of downstream activities, and understood that, as large players in the ICT area, they cannot be isolated from deployment issues;

- There has been some regional concentration of projects and networks. Although all EU-27 countries and 81 European Regions were represented, 50% of organizations came from just 12 Regions. There only 45 organizations from the New Member States (none of project applications led from Poland, for instance, were retained); This pattern appears to suggest that the most active regions are mainly those where is an awareness of the issue of deployment of ICT but also where national funding is not sufficient. The low levels of participation from New Member States suggest low awareness of deployment issues and their role in economic and social development. This may change quickly as they learn about the ICT issues and become familiar with this and similar programs.

- A drawback for a programme focused strongly on innovation was that a number of Europe's most innovative regions – Baden-Wurrtemberg is an example – were not represented. This may suggest that the most developed EU regions are far ahead in this area and that they are able to fund implementation of ICT solutions in public sector by their own means.

- Pilot A projects, intended for large scale and designed to build on Member States' initiatives, required for their credibility the involvement of key ministries, public organizations and expert bodies. Although proposals for Pilot A projects were fewer than anticipated, those retained were of sufficient credibility.

- In Pilot B projects, designed to bring together partners capable of providing the means for a first-time application of innovative responses to interoperability challenges, strong and relevant partnerships have been constructed, and there is every indicati0n that good results will be achieved.

- In Thematic Networks, the key issue was to achieve partnerships of companies and organizations with strong, relevant expertise and experience, and where possible to see a combination of those with good previous European experience, and others new to European work, able to bring in fresh ideas and approaches, and whose awareness of the potential for use of ICT could be raised as a result of their participation. These conditions were broadly met.

- Whilst it was clearly important that projects should have access to experience and existing networks or communities, and the 16% of participants that have been in at least 3 FP6 projects, the fact that they are to be found in 19 of the 22 retained projects is worrying. It suggests that very few projects have emanated from outside the ranks of the ranks of the most experienced European applicants.

A survey of participating organizations has suggested:

- That in most cases the themes selected by participants would have been addressed with or without the support of ICT PSP, but funding from the programme has made it possible to go for a wider scale and scope of activity, and the programme has lent European credibility.

- The 50% funding has meant that in a number of cases projects have been obliged to extend their partnerships in order to raise the necessary match funding; it is likely to be too soon to know if this proves a positive or negative factor in their subsequent work.

- The positive impact most widely identified by programme participants is their increased opportunities to work together and learn from each other, particularly in Pilot B projects and Thematic Networks. Participants in Pilot A projects are already likely to be more experienced in European working, and more successful in improving communications between national authorities.

- The main risk identified is that the most active and experienced organizations may impose their approaches and solutions on the other partners. It is probably too early to be able to form a conclusion about this, but if it were to prove to be the case it would support concerns about the

presence of very experienced European project partners in so many projects, and about the risk that they might be over-influential in the selection of solutions to inter-operability issues.

- The one year period of testing solutions in real conditions is expected by participants to be of significant value in helping them bring appropriate solutions to their public – solutions that are more consensual, and therefore more likely to be adopted and exploited.

- For the smaller organizations involved in Pilot B projects, the opportunity to achieve critical mass, and the influence of large external stakeholders are likely to prove important determinants of longer term effectiveness.

- There appears to be some evidence that dissemination to external end-users has already begun. If this is the case it may be a positive consequence of the presence of highly experienced organizations in so may project.

- The perception is already growing where Thematic Networks are not underpinned by the involvement of organizations already involved in active and relevant networks they may struggle with the funds available to achieve sustainable results. The most effective networks may prove to be those that have been developed as extensions of existing networks or communities.

- It is too early to know whether major European public organizations will move to adopt the solutions offered by the programme. This is likely to depend on a series of complementary and sometimes conflicting considerations including the push from European policies and regulation, and the pull from demand for cost-effective solutions to e-issues. Much will also depend on whether they are able to access national or local providers for services to which they are attracted.

- On the positive side, there is an expectation that European public organizations will invest more in the future on e-issues and that in doing so they will look, at least in part, to the Commission's preferred strategy of network solutions as a model. If associated with improved financial support, his might provide significant leverage, especially in the more centralized Member States.

- The direct impact of the programme on businesses is likely to be limited by the fact that most markets remain national or regional, but assisted by the growth of cross-border partnership in a number of regions.

- Finally, and importantly since many of the projects are specifically designed to affect the daily life of individuals, impact on citizens is expected to take the longest to appear and may always be very difficult to measure. Indirectly, citizens will benefit greatly from improvements in both public and private services, but the visibility of more direct impacts will depend on the durability and impact of ICT PSP's legacy networks and communities.

Annex 2: Analysis made by the panel of the distribution of projects and networks against strategic objectives

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	Single EU information space	Strengthen investment in innovation and research in ICT	Inclusion, better public services and quality of life
enterprise competitiveness	**PEPPOL**	COLLABS, NET-SHARE, Intelligent cars	
innovation	**eGOS, EU Civil Registry, Open e Health**	**CLEAR, T SENIORITY, Common Platform for Ageing well**, NEXES	**Digital TV for all, DREAMING**
competitive, innovative and inclusive IS	**STORK,** DEN4DEK, CALLIOPE, NESIS		eGOVMoNet, PEP NET, Immigrants ICT, EU Privacy open space
energy efficiency		ICT for energy efficiency	

Annex 3: Mapping made by the panel of ICT PSP projects and networks against ERDF and ESF priorities

ERDF priorities			ESF priorities
Pilots A and B			
Productive investment leading to the creation or maintenance of jobs;	PEPPOL DEN4DEC CO-LLAB		Workers and new skills
			Businesses undergoing change
Infrastructure;	eGOS EU Civil Registry DTV4ALL ICT21EE		Access to employment and social inclusion
			Education and training
Local development initiatives and the business activities of small and medium-sized enterprises.			Women and jobs
		T-SENIORITY	Fighting discrimination
			Working in partnership
		CommonWell The European Civil Registry network DREAMING	Better public services
ERDF priorities			**ESF priorities**
Thematic Networks			
Productive investment leading to the creation or maintenance of jobs;			Workers and new skills
			Businesses undergoing change
Infrastructure;		Immigrants ICT	Access to employment and social inclusion
			Education and training
Local development initiatives and the business activities of small and medium-sized enterprises.	NET-SHARE ICT for energy efficiency		Women and jobs
	Intelligent cars	Bridge IT	Fighting discrimination
		PEP NET	Working in partnership
	COLLABS	eGOVMoNet	Better public services
Others			
Health: CLEAR, CALLIOPE, S.O.S, NEXES		**Border control:** STORK	
Environmental protection: NESIS		**Transport and energy:** iCars Network	
		Privacy Privacy OS	

Annex 4: Indicative Evaluation Questions framed by the Commission

Relevance, coherence and synergies

- Have the themes and projects selected for support under the ICT-PSP specific programme been well chosen to contribute to the EU strategic objectives and policies, notably the Lisbon and Sustainable Development one? And how are they likely to contribute?

- Have the themes and projects selected for support under the ICT-PSP specific programme been well chosen to contribute to the DG INFSO strategic objectives and policies, notably the 12010 initiative, and how?

- To what extent has the ICT-PSP specific programme been complementary and coherent with other i2010 actions and activities?

Efficiency

- Is the ICT-PSP specific programme pursued in a cost-effective manner?

- Is management efficient (budget implementation, time to contract, evaluation of proposals, etc)?

- Is there room for simplification or reduction of administrative burdens?

- Is the legal framework (rules of participation, model contract, etc.) appropriate to the needs of the stakeholders?

- Are the processes operated in a clear and transparent manner?

- Are the levels of funding adequate?

- Have the instruments been designed in the best way to obtain the objectives set?

Effectiveness

- Are the themes and objectives funded so far well chosen to ensure that the overall and specific objectives of the ICT-PSP specific programme and the work programme are met?

- How relevant, coherent and useful were the work programmes?

- How consistent were the work programmes with the objectives of the ICT-PSP specific programme?

Utility

- Have the activities funded corresponded with the stated objectives?

- What outcomes would have been achieved without the ICT-PSP specific programme?

- Are the outcomes, results and impacts likely to be satisfactory from the point of view of direct or indirect beneficiaries?

Sustainability

- Are the foreseen effects of the funded proposals likely to continue into the future in the absence of EU intervention or support?