



COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

Brussels, 8.06.2001

**MEMORANDUM TO THE COMMISSION**

**Towards the e-Commission : Implementation Strategy 2001 – 2005**

**(Actions 7, 8 and 9 of the Reform White Paper)**

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## **MEMORANDUM TO THE COMMISSION**

### **Towards the e-Commission : Implementation Strategy 2001 – 2005**

#### **(Actions 7, 8 and 9 of the Reform White Paper)**

#### **1. FOREWORD**

Modern information and communication technologies open up unprecedented opportunities for the Commission to improve and simplify its own internal administration, to serve citizens and business better and to interact and communicate more quickly and efficiently with partner institutions and public bodies.

Furthermore, enhanced access to information enables us to honour commitments on transparency and open administration and facilitates third party participation through electronic consultation and feedback processes. The achievement of these objectives is one of the key elements of the Reform process embarked upon by this Commission: its success depends on our ability to embrace the new ways of working which these developments make possible.

Evolution is necessary in terms of quality of service provided, both to private and public sector partners. Administrations are also now called upon to innovate and make the necessary investment in modern systems which are convenient, more user friendly and cost effective.

The e-Europe Action Plan<sup>1</sup> recognises that a changeover to electronic interaction also involves major changes to the internal workings of administrations. This can be complex to manage since "the challenge of improving efficiency in the public sector will require a re-thinking of internal organisation and of electronic exchanges both within and between institutions". Thus we need to adapt to new ways of thinking and adopt new business practices. This is the principal challenge of the administrative reform.

Furthermore, in the context of the e-Europe Action Plan the Commission is committed to ensure that "all basic transactions with the European Commission must be available on-line by the end of 2001". Despite the many advances the Commission has already made, this commitment is obviously an extremely challenging target. This Communication paves the way towards achieving this goal.

The fundamental purpose of this e-Commission Communication is to establish the implementation strategy by which we can drive forward the necessary organisational and procedural changes required to meet our ambitious objectives.

Neil Kinnock

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/information\\_society/eeurope/pdf/actionplan.en.pdf](http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/information_society/eeurope/pdf/actionplan.en.pdf)

## 2. INTRODUCTION

The globalisation of markets brought about to a considerable extent by recent advances in information and communication technologies (ICT) has thrown up a series of challenges to the European economy. This was explicitly recognised at the European Council in Lisbon in March 2000 which set the ambitious objective for Europe to become the most competitive and dynamic economy in the world. It acknowledged the urgent need for Europe to exploit quickly the opportunities of the knowledge-based economy and, in particular, the internet.

In response, the Commission adopted an e-Europe Action Plan<sup>2</sup> which was endorsed by the Feira European Council in June 2000. This identified ten areas for action at European level. One of these areas directly addresses the response that governments should make.

Two principal objectives were identified:

- efforts by public administrations would be made at all levels to exploit new technologies to make information as accessible as possible;
- member states should provide generalised electronic access to basic public services by 2003.

The e-Europe Action Plan recognises that a changeover to electronic interaction also involves major changes to the internal workings of administrations. This can be complex to manage since "the challenge of improving efficiency in the public sector will require a re-thinking of internal organisation and of electronic exchanges both within and between institutions". In this context the Commission confirmed the need to "revise its procedures to better exploit digital technologies in the context of its reform".

This commitment had already been made in the Reform White Paper of March 2000<sup>3</sup> which recognised the importance of the development of the e-Commission for the delivery of reform. As the White Paper stated, better use must be made of the opportunities afforded by modern information technologies in order create an e-Commission - "...an administration which is ....exemplary in its advanced use of information technology, a model of a completely computerised administration, a paperless Commission"<sup>4</sup>.

In particular the White Paper identified three areas for action:

- the definition of a strategy to ensure an optimum use of Information and Communication Technology and communications networks;
- meeting users needs both internally and externally;

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<sup>2</sup> [http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/information\\_society/eeurope/pdf/actionplan.en.pdf](http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/information_society/eeurope/pdf/actionplan.en.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> COM(2000)200/3

<sup>4</sup> Mr Prodi – speech to European Parliament in March 2000

- propose changes to the public procurement legal framework to allow the use of electronic means in all public procurement procedures and transactions.

Increased application of ICT will enable the Commission, in terms of its own administration and its dealings with other Institutions, member state governments, citizens and business, to be at the forefront of best practice in providing faster and more responsive services. ICT is an enabling factor, which will contribute towards achieving overall Commission objectives and the broader goal of European governance.

The exploitation of digital technologies will increase efficiency and transparency, cut costs and speed up administrative processes for citizens and business. This move towards an e-administration is also a crucial enabling condition for the success of internal administrative reform through simplified on-line administrative procedures, improved information flows and knowledge sharing. The 128 Commission delegations throughout the world should fully participate in this evolution, with IT systems and software which are interoperable with those used in Brussels, and with comparable access to such systems.

This can only be achieved in the context of a properly funded, dynamic and co-ordinated plan addressing each of the principal areas of action to ensure adherence to priorities, inter-operability of systems and efficiency in the use of resources.

The purpose of this Communication is to establish the overall implementation strategy and orientations within which ICT can be more effectively applied to support the reform initiatives and achieve the e-Commission. The principal areas to be addressed are identified, a provisional work plan is set out, a management framework for guiding implementation is proposed and estimates of the total budgetary impact are provided.

Three important and constituent elements of the e-Commission are themselves the subject of individual Communications. Thus “Management Reporting<sup>5</sup>” and “Interactive Policy Making<sup>6</sup>” have already been adopted, and a communication concerning “EUROPA 2<sup>nd</sup> Generation” is in an advanced stage of preparation.

### **3. CONTEXT**

The drive towards an e-Commission mirrors developments already taking place in many public and private bodies throughout the world.

Most member states are now setting in hand programmes to ensure that their administrations and citizens benefit to the maximum from the possibilities offered by on-line services. The e-Europe action plan sets targets for member states in this domain and has established the benchmark parameters to monitor progress.

From a survey of available literature, a picture can be gleaned of the progress being made by other administrations. The principal areas being addressed by almost all national administrations are electronic service delivery, communication with citizens

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<sup>5</sup> SEC(2000)1800/2 of 31/10/00

<sup>6</sup> E/565/2001 - see IP/01/519

and electronic tendering/procurement. Some examples of typical national administration initiatives are given below purely to illustrate current tendencies.

Finland aims to have a significant proportion of forms and requests on-line by 2001. It already has a highly developed ICT infrastructure and advanced level of public sector information systems to support this. It is estimated that there are more than one hundred pilot schemes in operation and feedback channels are used extensively to consult the public.

An example of progress in paper reduction and the associated efficiency gains is found in Italy, where the move to e-administration and increased use of electronic forms is estimated to have already eliminated of the order of eighty million paper forms annually.

The French government's target is that all ministries will provide electronic public access to government services and documents. Consultation with the public will be carried out using such channels the internet, call centres and digital television. To reach these goals a budget of FF 6 billion (+/- € 1 billion) is foreseen over two years.

Similar developments and targets are being set in most other member states. The UK has recently updated its e-Government strategy. The original target was that 25% of government services should be capable of electronic delivery by 2002, 50% by 2005 and all services by 2008. These have now been revised and the current target is that all services will be capable of being delivered electronically by 2005. Expenditure of £ 2.5 billion (+/- € 4.2 billion) over three years has been made available for innovative capital-expenditure projects in the context of e-Government.

It is interesting to note that in the area of government public procurement alone, the UK authorities estimate potential savings of +/- £1 billion over a three-year period through the introduction of electronic services and management reforms.

In many ways, the Commission is significantly different from most national administrations in terms of the services to be delivered and the nature and size of the populations to be addressed. One of the most fundamental differences is that the Commission (like other EU institutions) frequently has to operate and communicate in all the official Community languages. With the forthcoming enlargement, this will be an even more complex issue in the future. No national administration comes anywhere close to facing such a challenge. Nevertheless, there are many areas which are comparable: e.g. procurement, consultation, information communication, document & data exchange etc. Furthermore, in the domain of internal reform and procedures modernisation, all administrations face essentially the same challenges.

#### **4. TODAY'S E-COMMISSION**

Some of the elements of the e-Commission already exist. The Commission has been at the forefront in introducing internally modern ICT strategies over recent years and new tools and systems are beginning to emerge.

The e-Commission section of the Reform White Paper identified three principal objectives/strands where progress is required: Modernisation of the Internal Administration, More Efficient Communication with External Partners and Better Public Service to Citizens and Business.

A few examples of initiatives already undertaken in each of these areas are given in the following chapters.

#### **4.1. Internal Administration**

In terms of our own internal administration the actual technology put at the disposal of officials (PCs, internet, etc.) has generally kept pace with technological developments.

Likewise, many initiatives to improve productivity, efficiency and access to information have been developed. It is not necessary to list all of them here but, for example, the introduction of the suite of SICs (Systèmes d' Information Communs) has allowed the decentralised management of personnel, missions, leave etc.

In addition, the use of e-mail has not only revolutionised internal communication but also, to a large extent, contributed to a significant culture change, favouring informal communication at all levels.

Similarly, inter-service consultations (of which there are more than 6000 per annum) are progressively moving to a recently developed web-application "CIS-Net<sup>7</sup>" which will provide an overview of the exact state and stage of each consultation and is part of the initial set of measures recently adopted to simplify the Commission's decision making processes.

Internal information dissemination has also been transformed by the introduction of 'EuropaPlus', which now is the principal source of administrative information for officials on subjects ranging from vacant posts to information on the Reform. It has not only contributed to the reduction of paper but has, just as importantly, provided easy access to background documentation and a means to provide feedback to the central administration. Access by officials in the delegations to EuropaPlus has also opened up the possibility of putting them on an equal footing with other Commission services. Similarly many DGs now have well-established intranets providing their personnel with rapid access to information relevant to their domain of activity.

The development of teleworking has been the subject of pilot actions in DG EMPL and DG INFSO. Internal and external evaluations have concluded that this type of working has not reduced efficiency while, at the same time, enhancing quality of life. Further developments are foreseen in this area based on these pilot experiences. Teleworking may be classified into three types: working from home (as a permanent arrangement), working from home outside normal hours ("day extending") and working whilst on the move ("roaming users" e.g. on mission etc). Commission officials can already have access remotely to EUROPA+ and their e-mail. The technical infrastructure required to support all three types of teleworking has to be reinforced. In the case of teleworking from home, the current administrative framework would need to be adapted to cater fully for it. DG ADMIN are currently working on this issue.

A recent example of improved internal administration through the use of new technologies is the introduction by DG ADMIN of on-line purchasing of office supplies. This project enables resource gains and improved delivery times;

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<sup>7</sup> CIS-Net – Consultation Inter-Services

inventories need no longer be kept and items are delivered directly to the user within twenty-four hours of ordering.

A major effort is also currently underway to improve the delegations ICT facilities: in particular in the domains of telecommunications and access to Commission systems.

In terms of management reporting the introduction of Activity-Based Management and Activity-Based Budgeting is being supported by the development of an on-line management information tool, the "Integrated Resource Management System" (IRMS). This has been designed to improve managers' access to key information in a user-friendly fashion.

#### **4.2. Interaction with External Partners**

Many DGs (ESTAT, AGRI, TRADE, TAXUD, FISH to mention just a few) already use electronic means for exchange of data with national administrations and other partners. Although in many cases this is still based on the exchange of tapes containing the data, this method is being increasingly replaced and superseded by electronic data transmission. DG TAXUD for example operate one of biggest administrative networks (CCN/CSI<sup>8</sup>) whereby some 4.5 million messages are exchanged monthly with and between the national customs and taxation authorities. In the context of the Structural Funds 2000-2006, a data base common to all the Funds (EMPL, REGIO, AGRI, FISH) has been created and is accessed from the Member States via the TESTA network.

In this context also, the IDA (Interchange of Data between Administrations) programme of DG ENTR promotes electronic exchange of information between administrations and Institutions at a trans-European level. It makes use of telematic networks (including services and applications) to connect member states' administrations, the Commission and other Institutions. Amongst its achievements are:

- Interchange of data in areas such as employment (EURES), healthcare (EUPHIN), pharmaceuticals (EUPHIN), environment (EIONET), etc.
- Communication and management of official documents (including GREFFE 2000), supporting the decisional procedures of the Commission and the provision of official legislative proposals by the Commission to the other Institutions and the member states.
- The provision of standards-based, secure networking services (TESTA) between administrations and European institutions, the provision of electronic signature services and the development and promotion of CIRCA (an internet-based groupware tool currently used by several hundred Committees).

#### **4.3. Serving Citizens and Business**

The Commission has progressively introduced internet technologies as the fastest and most efficient means of informing the outside world of its policies and

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<sup>8</sup> Common Communications Network/Common System Interface

programmes. “EUROPA“ ranks among the most consulted and referenced public web-sites in the world.

Prototype portal (web sites providing a single gateway to an enterprises information and knowledge bases by integrating, through a unique entry point, a complete range of information and services) projects are presently under way in various Commission departments (e.g. e-Europe, Information Society for all, EU law, virtual Press Room for the media, business and citizens, the European Union in the World....) with a view to providing easy access to all existing information by theme, audience or across departmental boundaries.

Many other actions have been initiated in this field e.g. the new web site launched by ESTAT as the key portal for European statistics, offering easy access for citizens to the latest statistical data, on-line ordering of publications and links to related information.

Similarly, “Dialogue with Citizens and Business” which is piloted by DG MARKT, provides on-line assistance in terms of information and problem solving in the context of the internal market. The “Business Feedback Mechanism” (an on-line monitoring tool for the application of internal market policy) set up by DG ENTR and DG MARKT has paved the way for the recently adopted Interactive Policy Making initiative. DG COMP has contributed greatly to transparency in the state aid sector by making the State Aid Register available on-line via Europa.

Another example is that of DG INFSO which is preparing a project for an on-line information service for SMEs on e-Commerce.

At the same time initiatives have been developed in the context of a number of interactive services (e-mail boxes, discussion groups, chat-lines with Commissioners and forums) that pave the way for new forms of electronic communication.

## **5. OBJECTIVES: DELIVERING THE E-COMMISSION**

Like most administrations throughout the world, however, the Commission has struggled to meet the ever-growing expectations for better and more efficient cost-effective services.

The Reform White Paper identified the exploitation of the opportunities provided by modern ICT for increasing productivity, efficiency and effectiveness i.e. the creation of an e-Commission, as one of the fundamental elements for the success of administrative Reform. Of course technology by itself is not sufficient: its application must go hand in hand with the requisite changes in the administrative framework and working procedures.

As already mentioned, the three principal objectives may be classified into the following strands:

- Modernisation of the internal administration: better value for money
- More efficient communication with external partners
- Better public service to citizens and business

A related series of measures in the areas of information management, the underlying technical infrastructure, and ICT security are also required.

Achieving this necessitates an e-Commission work plan (blueprint) defining the required actions, clearly-defined policies for the optimal application of ICT to support these actions, an effective management structure to ensure coherent, consistent and measurable progress towards the stated objectives, a secure high-performance ICT infrastructure, and sufficient resources to complete this plan in a reasonable time-scale.

The principal objectives to be achieved in the context of each of these strands are considered in this chapter, as is the required ICT infrastructure. The proposed management framework, work plan/roadmap and the resource requirements are treated in subsequent chapters.

## **5.1. Modernisation of Internal Administration**

The modernisation of the internal administration, harnessing the power of new digital technologies, and the consequent re-engineering of systems, is a pre-requisite for the realisation of the other two strands of the e-Commission. In order to be able to meet adequately our fundamental internal requirements, and to serve satisfactorily the demands of our external partners and other clients, we must equip ourselves with the necessary supporting procedures and technologies.

Delivery of this strand of the e-Commission requires achieving the following objectives:

- improved knowledge management and sharing;
- collaborative and team working enabled by shared documents and data, compatible integrated processes and a coherent technical infrastructure ensuring interoperability of systems;
- raising levels of staff productivity by the provision of powerful, user-friendly, integrated tools;
- making available to management the requisite data for informed management decision making;
- enhancing financial and resource management and internal control;
- simplifying core business processes, ensuring their compatibility, and implementing the security infrastructure (e.g. electronic signature/visa) needed to move from paper-based to electronic procedures;
- improving document management, circulation, filing and archiving;
- improving reliability, security and quality of documents and data.

The achievement of some of these objectives has already been addressed in the Commission Communication – “Management Reporting in the Commission”<sup>9</sup> which

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<sup>9</sup> SEC(2000)1800/2 of 31/10/00

recognised that good management reporting is a pre-requisite for the introduction of Activity Based Management (ABM) which is one of the cornerstones of the Reform process. The objective is to incorporate the necessary management information contained in human resource and budget information systems – measuring actual developments throughout the year - into the Integrated Resource Management System (IRMS) and to ensure that all necessary management information needs are addressed. The overall reporting requirements will be completed by the inter-connection of the local systems with the relevant central repositories.

The implementation of internet-based state-of-the art workflow and electronic document management systems, which will enable officials to create, share, approve, retrieve and archive essential information is fundamental for the modernisation of our internal administration. Ideally, every official should be able to access information easily at anytime and from anywhere using secure desktop or portable computing facilities and secure communication networks.

The introduction of these technologies, together with advances in the re-engineering of procedures, is one of the cornerstones supporting the simplification of the College's own decision-making procedures. A first set of decisions<sup>10</sup> has already been taken in this regard which incorporate reference to the importance of digital technologies in the simplification process.

Reforming financial management and internal financial control is one of the main challenges of the Reform process. Allocating greater responsibility to authorising officers requires not only a change in procedures but also the provision of timely and accurate information at all stages of the management process.

The implementation of workflow and automatic audit trails in every information system will greatly enhance the internal control capability by providing “real time” information on the status of every transaction to both authorising officers and internal audit teams.

The important ongoing effort to integrate fully the delegations into the standard Commission administrative processes must be continued.

Finally, the Reform White Paper called for changes to the public procurement legal framework to allow for the use of electronic means in all public procurement procedures and transactions. This requires advances in the legal and administrative background supported by the development of appropriate IT tools to allow on-line procurement. Given the importance and complexity of this question, it will be the subject of detailed proposals in the coming months. A working group chaired by DG BUDG and including DG MARKT and DG ADMIN/DI has been set up to address this issue.

## **5.2. Improved Communication with External Partners**

The introduction of digital technologies has revolutionised our ability to communicate effectively and efficiently with our institutional and other partners. The Commission should aim at playing a leading role in this area by working with them to ensure optimal exploitation of the existing communication possibilities.

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<sup>10</sup> SEC(2000)1757

The modernisation of our internal administration impacts directly on our ability to communicate effectively with other Institutions and national administrations. This will build on the achievements already made mainly in the context of the IDA programme. Every effort must be made to ensure coherence between actions taken in collaboration with our external partners (e.g. via IDA and e-Europe programmes) and actions launched for purely internal purposes. In effect, both types of actions are increasingly intertwined.

In addition, advances will be needed in terms of upgrading the server and telecommunications infrastructure, and the information systems to support information exchange. Due to the diversity of the infrastructure available to our partners, consensus will be needed to select the technology standards and software tools required to ensure efficient and effective communication. Common data exchange standards must be promoted to facilitate interoperability of systems. The potential offered by developments in open source software should be taken into account when defining technical strategy.

Other areas which offer potential for partnership projects are on-line document exchange, video-conferencing, web-based discussion groups, shared portals (information gateways), common electronic public procurement and other interactive measures.

### **5.3. Better Public Service to Citizens and Business**

This final strand considers ways of improving communications with our external clients. Digital technologies provide us with the vehicle for collecting feedback from citizens and business, vastly improving our response times, rapidly publishing more detailed and timely information, and all at a much lower cost to the taxpayer.

One of the objectives identified in the e-Europe Action Plan was “to ensure that citizens have easy access to essential public data as well as promoting on-line interaction between citizens and government”. The action plan also requires that the Commission be able to handle all basic transactions on-line by the end of 2001. While the target date may look somewhat unrealistic now, the objective remains clear, and as seen below, progress is being made to ensure that the Commission achieves the goal of providing information, interactive communication and transaction services in partnership with the EU institutions and the Member States. This will serve to reinforce on-line civic engagement with the Institution.

Portals are today the most effective means of delivering public administration web-sites since they integrate, through a unique entry point, a complete range of information and services without the need to know the background organisational complexity. The establishment of a homogenous look and feel to web content and interfaces will also provide a professional, more user-friendly image of the Commission.

A complete review of the EUROPA service (EUROPA 2) is currently under way and given its scope and importance in the overall context of the e-Commission is the subject of a separate Communication. This envisages the development and maintenance of an "advanced multilingual internet presence so as to publish, interact and transact online to the highest standards set by the leading world e-government administrations."

The Reform White Paper Action Plan called for “the extension of the use of the internet to ensure consultation and feedback on major political initiatives. The aim would be to go beyond simply publishing policy documents on the internet, and to establish appropriate feedback mechanisms”.

As a response to this, DG MARKT, in co-operation with 26 other services, is leading an initiative on interactive policy-making (IPM). It will use the internet to collect and analyse a constant flow of up-to-date feedback from citizens, consumers and business on where and why problems are occurring in relation to EU policies. It will provide an important new source of information in assessing the impact of existing EU policies on the ground. IPM will also set-up a structured mechanism for open consultation of the public on proposals for new initiatives.

On-line information submission is similarly a requirement for us to serve our clients. The scope for this is immense and its complexity cannot be overstated. These include on-line validation, direct feedback and facilities for reporting complaints and allegations of infringements. On-line applications for all types of grants, in particular for participation in Community programmes, will form an essential feature of this process. A pilot scheme is currently in progress to permit a number of recruitment functions to be carried out on-line.

A crucial factor to recall when considering these interaction and communication possibilities with the public, and one which poses an enormous challenge, is the requirement to take into account the multilingual aspect of the target populations. With the foreseen enlargement, the number of required languages may increase to 23, thus adding significantly to the workload and cost associated with the provision of such services.

Finally, secure and robust on-line systems need to be put in place to allow electronic tendering for procurement, contract and payment tracking systems and electronic invoicing and funds transfer.

## **5.4. Information Management, ICT Infrastructure & Security**

### **5.4.1. Information Management**

One of the prerequisites for the realisation of the efficiencies and enhanced provision of services flowing from the increased application of ICT to support the business processes of the Commission, is the adoption of a coherent policy for Information Management and the ICT required to support it.

Implementing Information management thus involves three main layers:

- The definition of overall information requirements and policy.
- The definition of an information systems strategy, designed to handle the required data.
- The adoption of an Information Technology strategy which identifies those IT tools and technologies required to provide the technical infrastructure and to underpin the required information system strategies.

The Information Management principles applied will be those which have already been adopted as best practice by many public/private sector bodies. These include simplification of procedures and processes, systems inter-operability/integration, adequate security/privacy and benchmarking.

#### **5.4.2. Underlying ICT Infrastructure & Security**

An e-administration depends on a secure technical infrastructure – a coherent combination of ICT equipment and associated services (e.g. computers, software, communication lines, e-mail services) which support the electronic means of working. While much of this infrastructure is already available, some key elements remain to be put in place. Examples of these required improvements are generalised secure e-mail, electronic signatures, document management, workflow and archiving facilities. Also the current and planned actions aimed at integrating the delegations into the Commissions ICT infrastructure must be completed. The adaptations necessary due to the forthcoming accessions, including the multilingual impact, must also be foreseen and planned.

A particular attention will need to be paid to security issues. In this context, the new Communication treating security of networks and electronic communications<sup>11</sup> is of particular relevance.

### **6. CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS**

From the outset it has been recognised that the challenge of achieving the e-Commission is as much a matter of organisational and procedural change as it is a question of computers and software. In this respect it has to be underlined that while the technology is indeed an enabling factor, it is only useful in so far as its application is driven by users and management to assist them in the achievement of their missions and objectives.

A number of key critical success factors must be addressed when embarking on an e-administration strategy.

– *High-level commitment*

The consistent support and involvement of top and middle management in all phases of the change process is absolutely essential to ensure the success of such a major initiative.

– *Change is a management challenge*

Major IT projects are essentially organisational change initiatives, and must be organised and managed accordingly. The necessary organisation must be put in place to drive forward the e-Commission initiative, to mediate and to co-ordinate the required changes. It must be able to deal authoritatively with potential organisational conflict and be capable of clarifying rapidly responsibilities and priorities. (see *Chapter 7 Management & Organisation*).

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<sup>11</sup> COM (2001) 298

– *Changes in working culture*

To be successful, the required modernisation of the Institution's organisation and the change to new electronic work procedures must achieve widespread acceptance by the staff, many of whom will see a considerable change/evolution in the nature of their tasks. The difficulties inherent in such changes in working culture must not be under-estimated. An implementation approach based on pilot projects will alleviate to some extent these risks; equally gaining end user commitment is essential. To encourage users to adopt new systems, a particular emphasis must be given to the user-friendliness aspect.

– *End-user Training & Accompanying measures*

The changes in working culture mentioned above will require a significant staff training programme and other accompanying measures. This will need to be taken into account in the overall reform-related training requirements. The accompanying measures include the adaptation where necessary of the administrative framework.

– *Simplification of Procedures and adaptation of working methods*

New technologies can rarely be applied to existing processes per se – they demand change. Existing practices and procedures will first have to be re-engineered if the expected benefits are to be realised. Procedure simplification and working methods adaptation are essential prerequisites for success.

– *Secure & Interoperable ICT Infrastructure*

The availability of a secure high-performance common ICT infrastructure to support the required systems and new ways of working, accompanied by common architecture guidelines to ensure interoperability, are critical enabling factors. Users must be perfectly confident that the provided ICT tools offer the requisite level of security if they are to be persuaded to make the change from paper-based to electronically-enabled procedures.

– *Availability of properly-trained ICT staff*

The availability of enough properly-trained ICT staff in each DG is absolutely necessary to monitor and guide the proposed actions and to support the end-user community; the recruitment and mobility procedures, especially between DGs, should be improved to create a continuity in ICT projects and services.

## **7. MANAGEMENT AND ORGANISATION**

Building the e-Commission is a “project”, inextricably linked to the general administrative reform. It involves a myriad of coherent organisational and technical measures/initiatives right across the Commission. As such it requires an organisation and management structure that will ensure the project is actively managed, driven forward, monitored and supplied with the required resources. Maintaining the required coherence of initiatives, priorities and resources in a highly decentralised organisation is a major management challenge.

The principal structures and procedures proposed are:

- A new committee (the e-Commission Steering Committee) will oversee the implementation of the e-Commission. It will report to the Vice-President for Reform. The Director General of an operational DG will hold the Presidency of this group and the secretariat will be provided by the Informatics Directorate. Its core membership will consist of the Director Generals of the DGs identified in the White Paper as responsible for implementing the e-Commission reform actions<sup>12</sup>, namely DG ADMIN, BUDG, INFSO, OPOCE, MARKT, PRESS and SG. This will be expanded to ensure balanced representation of both “horizontal” and policy-oriented (“vertical”) DGs. A rotation system will be used to allow each DG to participate fully. Its function will be to approve strategy and actions for implementing the e-Commission (the e-Commission work plan), define priorities, monitor progress and clarify where necessary the responsibilities for the implementation of the proposed actions. In addition, it will prepare each year, before the APS and budgetary procedures begin, a report indicating e-Commission priorities. This will be submitted to the DGs, in order that they may take account of it in their annual budgetary proposals.
- The Informatics Directorate will ensure the overall technical co-ordination and coherence of the e-Commission work plan and support its implementation. It will establish an e-Commission project office. This will support the work of the e-Commission Steering Committee and will work in close collaboration with the IT managers (IRMs) of the DGs, the CTI (Comité Technique Informatique) and the SG. The project office will co-ordinate the integration of individual projects into the overall work plan and keep it up-to-date.
- While full management and financial responsibility for each project remains with the concerned DG, projects included in the e-Commission work plan will respect the general informatics architecture guidelines to ensure interoperability and overall technical coherence. They will also respect as far as possible the common e-Commission orientations and progress reporting, evaluation and monitoring requirements.
- Given the decentralised management of IT, each service will have the primary responsibility for ensuring that targeted and planned actions in their areas of responsibility are executed and the necessary procedural changes put in place. The need for a fundamental re-engineering of many of the local business procedures and practices will require reinforcement of the role of IRMs and the increased participation of end user middle management in the process.
- Given the importance of ensuring that IT responds to user requirements, each DG is invited to ensure, for instance through an e-Commission forum or process, that the necessary dialogue between its IT manager and its business managers concerning local IT priorities and proximity services takes place.
- The CTI, which brings together the IRMs of each DG, under the presidency of the Informatics Directorate, is an essential structure to enable those with direct responsibility for ICT questions to decide on common approaches, prepare and approve IT policy papers and exchange information.

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<sup>12</sup> White Paper Chapter II-VI “Towards the e-Commission”

- In order to ensure user representation and the coherence of ICT and business objectives, its meetings will be extended at regular intervals to include representatives of user middle management. On such occasions it will be known as the e-Commission Forum.
- Increased co-operation will be necessary with the SPS to ensure the increasingly important security aspects are fully taken into account. Similarly the new data protection regulations will be respected and full collaboration with the new Data Protection Officer of the Commission will be required.

## 8. ROADMAP

The establishment of the e-Commission is an on-going process which has already begun, but the demands of citizens, business and other third parties mean that a quantum leap is now required if the legitimate expectations of our clients are to be met.

Realising the e-Commission requires the co-ordinated implementation of a coherent set of complementary projects/activities, both organisational and ICT. The challenge is to identify all of the required actions, and define a coherent overall approach and plan, - a *blueprint* and an associated work plan, whereby each activity and project has its clearly-defined place in a planned and co-ordinated evolution towards the e-Commission. It is planned to have this blueprint and work plan available by the end of 2001. An associated scoreboard for monitoring progress will be developed, based as far as possible on benchmark parameters adapted from those used for Member States in the e-Europe context.

This work plan will cover a period of five years and will be structured in terms of the specific objectives to be achieved and the individual projects required for the attainment of these objectives. It will aim at achieving comparable quality of service throughout the Commission. Major actions already taken in the framework of the e-Commission will be included. Each item of the work plan will include as far as possible a detailed schedule for achievement with estimated costs and budget lines and estimated savings (such as a specific or general productivity gain estimated as percentage). The e-Commission will be a continuous process for the foreseeable future. Thus this work plan will be dynamic, and will require regular updating, taking account of progress made and new projects/initiatives as the necessity arises.

Based on the preparatory work already undertaken in the context of each of the strands of this Communication, a provisional work plan and planning has been drawn up – Annexes 1 and 2, indicating the principal areas of action leading to the e-Commission.

The Commission will be assisted in the preparation of this work plan by external experts with the requisite experience in the different areas.

## 9. RESOURCES

Obviously an undertaking of this scale will entail the investment of substantial resources, as was recognised in the White Paper (Chapter VI, paragraph *Investing in Reform*). It is not possible at this stage to present fully detailed figures: what are

presented are estimates based on the provisional work plan. These estimates will be updated once the more complete work plan is available.

The following summarises the accompanying financial statement.

As regards budget impact, estimated budget amounts are given for two scenarios, each covering a provisional work plan over the period 2001-2005. Both scenarios are based on the current IT master plans of the DGs for 2001 and 2002 and are in line with current budget provisions. For the years beyond 2002, the figures have been estimated. It can be expected that the DGs will move closer to the e-Commission objectives by better targeting and co-ordinating current and future projects. Certain future projects may be the subject of separate communications to the Commission, as it was done for Europa 2<sup>nd</sup> Generation and Interactive Policy Making.

For the *baseline* scenario, a conservative approach is taken, covering only selected elements of the requirements. This may be considered as the minimum necessary if the Commission is to successfully apply ICT to support the reform of its internal administration and keep pace with its external partners over the next five years.

However, based on the tendencies already observed in the DG masterplans for 2001-2003, it is envisaged that increased resources will need to be allocated to the areas of procedures/working methods, infrastructure, document/data exchange and financial transaction systems in the future. The *target* scenario addresses more fully these requirements and incorporates certain extra actions, particularly regarding external partners, citizens and businesses, which are necessary to ensure that the objectives of the e-Commission are more completely accomplished within the 2001-2005 timeframe.

The estimated additional (i.e. over and above the current level of IT expenditure) IT budget requirements to implement these actions within the e-Commission timeframe are given in column two of the table below.

The estimated amounts (including staff) in €M for each scenario are:

	<b><u>Baseline</u></b> Budget lines (A,B)	<b><u>Additional Reqd</u></b> <b><u>Budget lines (A)</u></b>	<b><u>Target Total</u></b> Budget lines (A,B)
2001	40.200	<b><i>0.000</i></b>	40.200
2002	42.100	<b><i>0.000</i></b>	42.100
2003	43.300	<b><i>5.200</i></b>	48.500
2004	44.000	<b><i>7.200</i></b>	51.200
2005	44.600	<b><i>8.400</i></b>	53.000
<b>TOTAL:</b>	214.200	<b><i>20.800</i></b>	235.000

It is proposed to adopt the target scenario so as to ensure that the Commission not only modernises its internal administration, but also fully honours its commitments on transparency and facilitates third party participation through electronic consultation and feedback processes.

The normal resource request and allocation procedures apply for all projects, conforming to the applicable financial regulations. Thus each DG in charge of a specific project in the work plan will estimate its resource requirements and justify it in the normal budgetary procedure.

As regards personnel resources, and given the anticipated productivity increases to be realised over the life of the e-Commission, no significant increase in the need for additional human resources in IT is foreseen. Rather it will be a question of redeployment and retraining as necessary to ensure the availability of staff with the necessary expertise. In this context, for the baseline scenario, no request is being made for increases in IT staff levels over the period covered by this Communication. For the target scenario, a small increase (5 A posts + 5 B posts over the period) to manage the extra budget and related actions is foreseen. These will be allocated in the normal procedure, corresponding to the allocation of the budget to the various actions e.g. a DG receiving 1M EUR from the additional A budget request could also receive 1A and 1B post.

Training at all levels will be of fundamental importance. Significant strides have already been taken to develop the necessary ICT skills of our staff. Given the scope of the changes to be introduced however, substantial, on-going training using advanced technologies (e.g. e-learning) is required.

## **10. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Given the importance of the proposed approach for the reform of internal administration, the obligations accepted in the e-Europe initiative, and the need for the Commission to remain at the forefront of applying ICT to ensure efficient service delivery and communication with external partners and the public, it is essential that the Commission endorse the orientations outlined in this paper.

Accordingly the Commission is invited to:

- Approve the overall strategy and orientations as contained in this Communication
- Approve the organisational and management proposals for the implementation of the e-Commission
- Approve the orientations of the target scenario, within the existing financial perspectives

And more specifically to:

- Approve the creation, mandate and composition of the e-Commission steering committee
- Mandate the Informatics Directorate to ensure the overall technical co-ordination and coherence of the e-Commission work plan
- Confirm the key role of IT management in the DGs, working in conjunction with end user middle management, in delivering the e-Commission

- Approve the provisional roadmap and mandate the e-Commission steering committee to present the complete e-Commission roadmap/work plan by the end of 2001. This work plan should also include the related training plan and the other accompanying measures required.
- Request each DG to reflect on the e-Commission and reform actions required in their domains, and to integrate such actions into their work programs
- Approve the indicative budgetary orientations in the accompanying financial statement.

## **11. CONCLUSIONS**

The e-Commission is primarily an organisational project, with an important ICT element. It requires coherent organisational, and complementary ICT, initiatives right across the Institution. Achieving the e-Commission and the consequent benefits in effectiveness and efficiency will therefore be an ongoing process, over several years, integrating both new and existing initiatives.

This Communication provides the overall framework and orientations for the application of ICT to achieve the e-Commission over the next five years. The Commission will be regularly updated on progress of all e-Commission projects and initiatives.

Implementing the e-Commission is a challenge for the organisational capability of our institution. Either the Commission demonstrates now its ability to match the performance of other public/private bodies or it loses its capacity to operate and communicate effectively with its various partners and correspondents.

## **Annex 1**

### **e-Commission Work Plan: Required Deliverables - Provisional list**

#### **Modernisation of Internal administration**

##### **Simplification of procedures:**

- Replace existing paper-based working methods by electronic procedures, making use of workflow and knowledge sharing, and allowing greater efficiency in collaborative/team working e.g. on-line workflow creating digital ‘signataires’ and visas.
- On-line electronic archives providing storage, classification, search & retrieval functions.
- A correspondence (letters, faxes emails) handling system incorporating a control system assisting commitment to 15-day reply deadlines.

##### **Resource and information management:**

- An on-line integrated HR Management system bridging local DG & central DG ADMIN systems increasing transparency, efficiency & coherence.
- On-line management reporting systems to assist DGs to fulfill their internal control obligations (mission statement, annual activity report).
- On-line financial management systems combined with electronic supporting documents and audit trails for authorising officers.

##### **Increasing individual productivity:**

- Allow officials to perform all administrative tasks (missions, medical expenses, application forms etc) on-line (including submission of supporting documents).
- Ensure that IT-based applications and functions are easy to use, thus improving efficiency and reducing training needs.
- Give officials access to email, information systems and documents etc. irrespective of location.
- Improve officials’ access to training by developing the use of computer-aided learning techniques.

#### **Improved Communication with External Partners**

- Continue and expand current efforts and partnership projects for joint development of information and document exchange systems to avoid duplication and ensure coherence.

- Enhanced cooperation in adopting common data exchange standards and interoperable IT products and services to improve efficiency and speed of interaction.
- Enhanced exploitation of opportunities offered by new developments in the IDA programme.
- Exploit latest communication and digital conferencing technologies to promote closer and more frequent contact at low cost.

### **Better Public Service to Citizens and Business**

- Development of the Europa 2 internet multilingual portal as a single point of access to all Commission services.
- Set-up on-line helpdesk and supporting information system to provide interactive and timely client support services and knowledge bases.
- Promote interactive policy-making through structured on-line consultation regarding new initiatives and on-line monitoring of the application of EU policies and programmes through feedback mechanisms.
- Enhance transparency through increased on-line publication of information for the public e.g. concerning competition cases in the areas of State Aids etc.
- Provide on-line administration systems for programme/grant management, improving efficiency, timeliness and supporting better interaction.
- Instigate on-line e-procurement systems to handle tenders, contracts and payment tracking systems.

**Annex 2**  
**e-Commission Work Plan: Provisional Roadmap**

1. Internal Administration	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
<b>WORKFLOW:</b>					
Systems Modelling	X	X	X	X	X
Electronic Document Management Applications	X	X	X		
Group Work Functions			X	X	X
Knowledge Base Building			X	X	X
<b>INDIVIDUAL PRODUCTIVITY:</b>					
Teleworking/Remote Access	X	X	X		
On-line administration		X	X	X	X
Computer-Based Learning & Training		X	X	X	X
<b>PRIORITY SETTING &amp; RESOURCE ALLOCATION:</b>					
SPP cycle / BADGEBUD	X	X	X		
IRMS	X	X	X	X	
Evaluation		X	X	X	X
<b>WORKING METHODS:</b>					
Simplification of procedures & working methods	X	X	X	X	X
Electronic Public Procurement	X	X	X	X	X
Inter-Service Consultation	X	X	X		
<b>HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT:</b>					
SYSPER2 modules covering:	X	X	X	X	
Job Descriptions	X	X	X		
Task Assignments	X	X	X		
Recruitment	X	X	X		
Career development		X	X	X	

Training	X	X	X	X	
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL:					
Financial/Management Information	X	X	X	X	
Internal Control		X	X	X	X
Programme Management		X	X	X	

## Annex 2 (contd)

2. External Partners	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
DOCUMENT/DATA EXCHANGE :					
GREFFE 2000	X	X	X		
Document Sharing / Versioning (e.g. CIRCA)	X	X	X	X	
Common IT/IS Standards	X	X	X	X	X
Security & Encryption	X	X	X	X	
TESTA (communication infrastructure)	X	X	X	X	
Data/Information collection & delivery	X	X	X	X	X
INFORMATION CIRCULATION:					
Development of EUROPA 2 <sup>nd</sup> generation	X	X	X	X	
INTERFACING:					
Video-Conferencing & Mobile Communications	X	X	X	X	X
Electronic Discussion Groups/ Meetings	X	X	X	X	X

3. Citizens & Business	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
DOCUMENT/DATA EXCHANGE					
On-line Proposals		X	X		
On-line Applications		X	X	X	X
INFORMATION CIRCULATION:					
Development of EUROPA 2 <sup>nd</sup> generation	X	X	X	X	
Interactive Policy Making	X	X	X	X	X
FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS :					
Electronic Tendering	X	X	X		
Electronic Contracts			X	X	X

Electronic Receipts, Payments & Tracking			X	X	X
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4. Underlying Secure Technical Infrastructure	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Integrated Enterprise Data Architecture	X	X	X		
Web Database Management	X	X	X		
Web-based Applications Development Tools	X	X	X		
Document Management Systems & Workflow	X	X	X		
Security, Electronic signatures & Encryption	X	X	X		
Web Content Management Tools		X	X	X	