

**Study on trans-European deployment potential, sustainability and exploitation models for public services in the context of an enlarged European Union**

**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**Part 1:            Technical description**

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# eTEN: trans-European deployment potential, sustainability and exploitation models for public services in the context of an enlarged European Union

<http://europa.eu.int/eTEN>

## 1. CONTEXT

### 1.1. Motivation for the Study

From 2004 the eTEN programme will address a community of 25 Member States and this will significantly magnify the trans-European dimension of the programme. During 2004, a transition year, a key objective for the eTEN programme will be to facilitate integration of new Member States into the programme, and to determine priorities for actions that will accelerate the take-up of trans-European eServices.

The purpose of this Study is to assess, analyse and make operational recommendations that could achieve this key objective taking into account the state of development of eServices in both new and current Member States, national priorities and the objectives of the eTEN Programme.

### 1.2. The eTEN Programme – Context and Background

The eTEN programme is an instrument which supports the implementation of the Trans-European Networks (TENs) policy of the EU. The purpose of the TENs is to attract investments to increase the interconnection and interoperability of national networks paying special attention to the peripheral regions, in order to take maximum benefit from a geographical area without barriers. TENs are also designed to strengthen social and economic cohesion across the Community by reducing disparities between rich and poor regions. The eTEN programme contributes to the Trans-European Networks policy by using grant support to accelerate the deployment of e-services across the Community. The approach is conformant with EU competition policy.

The eTEN programme is founded in articles 154, 155 and 156 of the Treaty establishing the European Community. It has two legal bases:

- **Decision No 1376/2002/EC** of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 July 2002 amending Decision No 1336/97/EC on a series of **Guidelines** for trans-European telecommunications networks.
- **Regulation (EC) No 1655/1999** of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 July 1999, **amending Regulation (EC) No 2236/95** laying down general rules for the granting of Community financial aid in the field of trans-European networks (OJ 1995/L282/16 of 24.11.1995).

The Guidelines (Decision 1336/97/EC amended by Decision 1376/2002/EC) set out the objectives and priorities of the action, and the TEN Financial Regulation (Regulation 2236/95 amended by Regulation 1655/1999) defines the conditions and procedures for granting Community Aid. In July 2002 the European Parliament and Council adopted the revised Annex I of the eTEN Guidelines (COM(2002)1376.) which aligned the programme with eEurope 2005 objectives.

Further and highly significant revisions are being proposed. Most notably, the programme will aim to revise the TEN Financial Regulation, raising the maximum EU funding rate for eTEN deployment projects from 10% to 30% of total investment costs. The programme is also seeking to expand considerably in the longer term with a substantially increased budget. These proposed measures reflect a growing awareness of the need to support and accelerate the deployment of eServices across an enlarged EU, and indeed the broader policy debates prefiguring Community financial perspectives beyond 2006, including the European Growth Initiative and the constitutional basis for a wider EU. It is clear that the TENs programmes, in co-operation with other Community programmes (especially the Structural Funds) and other financing institutions, are set to play a stronger role in delivering on the European Growth Initiative as noted in the European Council meeting at Thessaloniki 19-20<sup>th</sup> June 2003.

### **1.3. The eTEN Programme – its focus and content**

As a key instrument of the eEurope Action Plan 2005, the eTEN programme supports the establishment of operational eServices of common interest. The main focus of the programme is the practical realisation of eEurope 2005 objectives by supporting eServices in the area of eGovernment (eAdministration), eHealth (eHealthcare), eInclusion, eLearning and eTrust and security services. Services of common interest contribute to the development of the information society in terms of growth, employment, social cohesion and participation for all in the knowledge-based economy. To ensure the full deployment of such services, eTEN encourages public administrations (national, regional and local) or organisations (e.g. hospitals, education establishments, public museums, public agencies in tourism or commerce, NGOs and other civic society associations, etc.) to propose and participate in projects. Public sector involvement, while not mandatory, would help to ensure the sustainability of the services after eTEN funding has finished.

An important aspect of the programme is its trans-European nature. A trans-European project is one which satisfies needs existing in several EU Member States. As a general rule, trans-European projects must be implemented in several Member States (minimum requirement is two Member States, as defined in the Workprogramme).

## **2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

### **2.1. Rationale**

A key objective for the eTEN programme during 2004 will be to facilitate a process of integration of the new Member States into the enlarged EU, and to determine priorities for actions that will accelerate the take-up of trans-European eServices. This will require an aggregation of existing knowledge and studies plus targeted field research on specific eTEN topics/issues followed by analysis leading to a set of operational recommendations. This would then allow orientations of future eTEN workprogrammes and procedures to be undertaken on a sound basis.

It is on this basis that the Study is to be undertaken. It should generate an informed and well researched report that can be used in the adaptation of the eTEN programme in 2005 and 2006, along with some indications for the 5 year period beyond.

Therefore the primary goal of the Study will be to use its output as one of the inputs to the definition of eTEN workprogrammes in 2005 and 2006, so that organisations from new Member States can participate in eTEN on an equal footing with those in the former EU15. The Study will also provide input to the planning and formulation of a potential successor programme to eTEN post 2006.

A secondary goal of the Study will be to serve as a focal point/forum during 2004 (transition period) for generating an understanding of eTEN in the new Member States and enabling those future stakeholders to express their views of their needs and priorities for support towards eServices deployment.

## **2.2. Objectives**

The objectives of the study are to assess, analyse and recommend actions that could address (amongst others) the following key factors:-

- Ongoing programmes and actions in the eServices domain in new Member States including identification of gaps vis-à-vis the state-of-the-art in the former EU15;
- Specific service needs in new Member States (priority areas) as identified by key stakeholders in key sectors especially where they extend existing successful e-services in the Community;
- Ability to replicate (i.e. transfer and localise) identified good/best-practice eServices into the existing structures of new Member States, including identification of any structural impediments;
- Limitations (or otherwise) of available telecommunications infrastructures which would have a bearing on the take-up of eServices;
- Access to capital for investments in public eService provision (i.e. matching funds to co-exist with Community funding) including comparability with EU-15;
- Variability of the above factors across the accession country grouping;
- Other salient points as proposed by the tendering contractor.

## **2.3. Expected Outputs**

The output of the study will be a comprehensive report which addresses the following issues.

- It should bring together available data (e.g. eEurope+ benchmark studies), recent and relevant independent reports (e.g. SAPIR report, amongst others) together with the results of a directed field study to provide a comparative overview of the state-of-play in eServices in new Member States.
- It should make operational recommendations on :-
  - How to facilitate the integration (i.e. participation of organisations) of new Member States into the eTEN programme and how to accelerate the take-up/deployment of eServices in new Member States;

- The priority to be given to different topics for inclusion in future workprogrammes.
- It should make a realistic assessment of the potential impact of eTEN given the available financial resources in the period 2005-2006.
- It should take a forward look to the longer term horizon assuming that the recommendations until 2006 have been effectively implemented; the actions and levels of investment needed for the programme to have a significant impact at EU level (25 countries plus Romania and Bulgaria) in the following 5 year period (2007-2011) should be assessed.

In order to improve the quality of the final report and as an integral part of the work, the study should facilitate specific seminars/workshops where initial and concluding findings are aired and discussed with key stakeholders in both the former EU15 and the accession countries.

EService planning in new Member States could well benefit from discussions with stakeholders (Senior Officials, public administrations and the private sector) which could lead to improved use of the research and improved service roll-out.

#### **2.4. Expected use of study report**

- The report will provide strategic input to the eTEN workprogramme for 2005 and 2006 in terms of shaping the nature and areas of interventions that will facilitate integration across the enlarged EU and an accelerated take-up of eServices.
- The report will be widely disseminated across the EU25 to eService stakeholders and investors at local, regional and national levels in order to increasing awareness in the issues raised by the study and to serve as a catalyst for stimulating actions to facilitate trans-European eServices.
- The report will be presented to other Commission services to facilitate planning of complementary actions (i.e. IST e-Services and IDA) and to managers of national programmes and their respective constituencies to be used as a basis for further research or preparation.
- The report will be distributed to stakeholders in new Member States so that it is available for improving national plans for the implementation of e-services.
- The report may be a contribution to considerations for a potential follow-on programme to the present eTEN beyond 2006.

### **3. DURATION**

The work will be carried out over a period of 7 months from the signature of contract. The study is expected to require about 12 man-months effort.

### **4. METHODOLOGY, DELIVERABLES AND MILESTONES**

Some indications of the methodology which may be used but tenderers should propose their own detailed methodologies showing how they meet the overall objectives of the study.

The methodology may include use of the following techniques:

- basic data and information gathering, including national and OECD statistics and stakeholder analyses;
- structured surveys;
- in-depth interviews;
- focus groups
- case-studies;
- analysis and assessment.
- economic modelling
- cost –benefit analyses
- foresight exercises

Proposers are also welcome to include designs involving new tools and techniques where these are clearly appropriate to the questions posed. All data used or referred to in outputs of the study must be linked to comprehensive metadata (i.e., information enabling users to interpret the data correctly, such as definitions of variables used, sampling decisions, how the data was processed, etc). The sources of all information cited or otherwise referred to must also be given.

Effective liaison must be established with Senior Officials in the ten new Member States. Effective liaison must also be established with a representation of Senior Officials from current member States (at least two). Contact information will be supplied by the Commission at the time of signature of contract. At least two workshops will be organised to which these Senior Officials will be invited, along with other interested stakeholders or their representatives in the eTEN programme.

The study should draw on information and views supplied directly by current and future key eTEN stakeholders, including service providers, industry, Commission staff (including staff of relevant services in other DGs), European Investment Bank (EIB) and European Investment Fund (EIF) representatives, etc.

**Considerable emphasis should be placed on the analysis and assessment stage of the study.** The contractor should draw up initial hypotheses for testing. The analysis and assessment should be guided by the socio-economic data and information gathered from published sources, the results of surveys, and information and opinion gathered via interviews. The contractor must support findings by an explanation of the degree to which these are based on opinion, analysis and objective evidence. Where opinion is the main source, the degree of consensus and the steps taken to test the opinion should be given.

In the case of surveys, both the full set of data and the full set of results tables must be made available to the Commission services on request. The contractor should use state of the art survey software for processing and preferably also for on-line submission of data.

#### 4.1. Overall Plan

<b>Task</b>	<b>Completed By End of:</b>
Deliver Inception Report	Week 2
Deliver First Progress Report	Week 6
First Steering Committee meeting	Week 7
First Workshop	Week 7
Submit Revised Workplan (if necessary)	Week 8
Interim Report	Month 4
Second Steering Committee Meeting	Month 5
Draft Final Report	Month 6
Third Steering Committee Meeting	Month 6.5
Second Workshop	Month 6.5
Final Report	Month 7

The work will start on signature of the contract which is anticipated to be late 2003/early 2004.

The project will be carried out in 2 phases, the first lasting about 8 weeks.

At week 2 the contractor will deliver an Inception Report containing his proposed Methodological Specification, Design and Planning.

At week 6 the first Progress Report will be delivered containing

- relevant background material, including plans and policies of new Member States where this is documented, reports of the state of development of the Information Society, relevant statistics, eEurope+ benchmark studies, etc
- detailed plan showing how the field study will be directed, what techniques chosen from the list above or elsewhere will be used and how the operational recommendations will be derived.

The first workshop and the first meeting of the Steering Committee will be held in week 7. Both events will lead to feedback to the contractor which should be used to refine his planning. Phase 1 ends with the approval of the first Progress Report.

An Interim Report will be supplied to the Commission by the end of month 4. The second meeting of the Steering Committee will be held by the end of month 5 and will provide feedback on progress to date along with any proposals for modification of the workplan to the contractor

A draft Final Report will be submitted by the end of month 6 and presented at a workshop to be held within 2 weeks. The third Steering Group Meeting will be held within two weeks of the end of month 6.

The Final Report will be delivered before the end of the contract.

Concise monthly reports will also be delivered on the fifth working day of each calendar month.

All meetings referred to in this section 4.1 will be held in Brussels on Commission premises. The contractor will be required to support all meetings with personnel qualified to cover the scope of the study. The locations of the workshops will be proposed by the contractor.

## **4.2. Organisational Structure**

1. A team of consultants (referred to as “the contractor” in these terms of reference) selected following this call for tenders will perform the study.
2. Senior Officials from current and new Member States will play an important role in providing information and contacts needed by the contractor. They will also contribute opinions and assist in the validation of the results. Senior Officials will be invited to both workshops and should be contacted during the course of study as needed to support the work.
3. The Commission will appoint a Steering Committee consisting of representatives of major stakeholders. This Committee will provide guidance to the contractor and advice concerning the progress and further evolution of the project.
4. The Commission services will provide a day-to-day administrative liaison point to ensure that , amongst other duties, documents and contacts with officials are provided to the evaluators on a timely basis.

### **4.3. Structure, Language and Style of Report**

#### **Structure**

The printed version of the Final Report should be presented in A4 format with a stand-alone executive summary. The indicative structure for the Final Report is as follows:

*Title page*

*Contents*

*Executive summary*

*Introduction*

*Research methodology*

*Study Results*

*Conclusions and Recommendations*

*Communications plan*

*Annexes*

- *terms of reference*
- *any additional tables*
- *references and sources*
- *glossary*

*Index*

#### **Language and style**

All reports must be written in English. It is essential that the report be clear, unambiguous and comprehensible for the non-specialist.

Once the Commission has approved the text of the draft final report, the contractor will propose for approval a four-colour A4 layout incorporating illustrations and graphics as appropriate.

The contractor must provide:

### **Inception Report**

- 5 paper copies;
- Word and Adobe Acrobat (pdf) versions of same;
- HTML presentation of same

### **First Progress Report**

- 5 paper copies
- Word and Adobe Acrobat (pdf) versions of same;
- HTML presentation of same.

### **Interim Report**

- 20 bound copies;
- Word and Adobe Acrobat (pdf) versions of same;
- HTML presentation of same.

### **Final Report**

- master-copy of stand-alone version in A4 printed format;
- 200 bound copies;
- Word and Adobe Acrobat (pdf) versions of same.

### **Key aspects and findings**

- PowerPoint presentation together with speaking notes;
- HTML presentation of same

*The copyright of both the report and the executive summary will reside with the Commission. The Commission services will be responsible for the dissemination of the report but may also encourage the contractor to publish in the open literature.*

#### **4.4. Publication and dissemination of evaluation report**

The contractor's reports, together with the comments of the Commission on their findings and recommendations, will be made available on the Commission website and disseminated widely to stakeholders and interest-groups.

#### **4.5. Approval of Interim and Final Reports**

After reception of all intermediate reports (Inception Report, First Progress Report, Interim Report, draft Final Report and Final Report) the Commission will have 30 calendar days to accept or reject the report and the Contractor will have 30 calendar days to adapt the report. The report will have been deemed to have been approved by the Commission if the Commission has not reacted within 30 calendar days of its submission.

**End of Technical Description**