Deploying Trans-European electronic Services for all

eTEN is a European Union programme that seeks to extend the potential benefits of the single European market and the information society to all European citizens by facilitating the widest possible participation in the new knowledge economy.

The Information Society offers Europeans a powerful new way of accessing services ranging from distance learning to healthcare. Electronic services ("e-services") can be made interactive, personalised and available over platforms ranging from the Internet to interactive television.

Public e-services such as eGovernment, eLearning and eHealth therefore offer huge potential improvements to everything from European competitiveness to quality of life.

Lowering Barriers to e-Services

e-Services, however, are normally created for national use, so their cross-border exploitation is limited by national linguistic, legal and administrative barriers. As a result, Europe's e-service landscape is fragmented into national markets at the design stage.

This prevents service providers from benefiting from Single Market economies of scale and trans-European telecommunications networks, making e-services more difficult to finance and deploy.

In addition, private investors tend to focus on sectors which show the best potential for short term profitability. There remain, however, many areas where e-services are in the general societal or economic interest, but either do not promise a rapid return on investment, or bring benefits which cannot be measured directly in financial terms.

Hence the eTEN programme, which supports the deployment of e-services with a trans-European dimension. With a budget of €170,5 million for 2003-2006, it promotes cross-border electronic services which recognise the reality of divergent administrative, linguistic and IT environments, but which can be adapted or customised to different national circumstances.

eTEN has already successfully shown the sustainability of such applications at European level. The Commission now aims to increase the actual number of services deployed.

Close to the Market

eTEN projects focus on practical services based on already established and mature technologies. It addresses the deployment of e-services delivered over existing broadband and mobile networks (on multiple platforms where appropriate), and encourages the exploitation of existing, successful research results.

eTEN is thus a bridge between innovative research projects and their practical implementation, providing opportunities for successful research and development projects to bring their results to market.

eTEN's "prepare for roll-out" approach is unique among EU Information Society activities.

eTEN's "prepare for roll-out" approach is unique among EU Information Society activities. It is there to help the partners overcome their project's initial investment and launch difficulties, and also helps with any organizational problems related to public/private partnerships.

There are two kinds of eTEN projects.

Validation projects are commercial feasibility studies which provide financial assistance during the prior validation phase of an e-service.

It is during this phase that the assumptions about the proposed e-service's operating costs and potential revenues, savings and public benefits are put to the test. This involves demonstrations or pilots of the proposed service, user feedback and peer reviews. eTEN funding can be up to 50%.

Deployment projects are aimed at the practical deployment of electronic applications and services. Funding is currently set at 10% of the costs of deployment for the initial rollout of a new service.

Public Interest Focus

The services should bring benefits to Europe's society, economy and employment, and should be self-sustaining in the long term without Community support.

Reflecting the eEurope 2005 Action Plan, the focus is on public interest services which give all citizens, enterprises and administrations every opportunity to gain from the Information Society.

One key aim is therefore to ensure organisations extend their services to users who might otherwise be marginalised, strengthening both economic and social cohesion in Europe by preventing the formation of a digital underclass.

Information Society

European Commission

Key Areas

Key project areas include:

- **eGovernment**: addressing on-line public services in the fields of culture, tourism, transport, mobility and the environment; services aimed at broadening participation in the democratic process;

- **eHealth:** addressing health information networks, electronic healthcare and insurance cards, extending advances in telemedicine to the healthcare sector, and expanding preventative services to a trans-European level;

- **eInclusion:** addressing the specific needs of people with disabilities, the elderly and the socially disadvantaged; overcoming socio-economic, geographic and cultural barriers;

- **eLearning:** addressing the use of multimedia technologies and the Internet to improve the quality of education and access to learning for all. The priorities are to facilitate lifelong learning, the reskilling of the workforce and digital literacy for all citizens;

- **Trust and Security**: addressing authentication, accreditation and other security issues for online commerce; risk and fraud management, best practices in eBusiness and eCommerce, e-procurement. Small businesses are especially targeted;

- **Small and medium-sized enterprises**: addressing services that facilitate the participation of SMEs in the electronic economy.

Example Projects

eTEN has already successfully shown the sustainability of e-services at European level. Recently funded projects include:

- SPES: promoting the adoption and full exploitation of digital signatures by Public Administrations;

- IREMMA: enabling the remote monitoring of asthma sufferers;

- SERCAL: providing a 24 hour home care service to elderly and disabled people through the use of call centre technology;

- ORPHEUS: making Europe's photographic heritage available to educational institutions through the Internet;

- ONLINE CONFIDENCE: creating an on-line dispute resolution service that will give buyers and sellers access to an out-of-court process which will be effective, transparent, independent and fair;

- EBR-TIC SERVICE: making official company information easily accessible directly from the company's website, allowed them to display an "EBR trustmark". By clicking on the trustmark, the user will get the basic set of data indicated on the EC Directive on electronic commerce.

Future Developments

A new Call for Proposals is planned for the first quarter of 2005. It will cover all areas of the eTEN programme and have an indicative budget of around €45m.

The Commission has also proposed increasing the funding ceiling for deployment projects from 10% to 30%, greatly increasing the number of initial deployment proposals and hence the quality and impact of projects (COM (2003) 220, April 2003).

See Also:

- Factsheet 5: eEurope 2005 Action Plan

All Factsheets and more can be downloaded from "Europe's Information Society: Thematic Portal", below.

Further Information

- **eTEN:** http://europa.eu.int/information_society/ activities/eten/index_en.htm

- **Europe's Information Society: Thematic Portal** http://europa.eu.int/information_society/

- **Information Society Directorate-General:** Av. de Beaulieu 24, 1160 Brussels infso-desk@cec.eu.int