



Thank you very much

Dear Chair Busoi,

Honorable Members of the European Parliament,

Thank you very much for receiving me today.

It is a pleasure for me and my team to be here before your distinguished committee. Indeed, it is the ITRE committee that has accompanied and followed the Interoperability Programme in 2016 – 2020.

I would like to take this opportunity to greet and thank Mr. Carlos Zorrinho and the shadow rapporteurs for your support to the ISA2 programme.

Today, it is my pleasure to present to you the evaluation of the ISA2 programme at the eve of its finalisation. Furthermore, I would take this opportunity to discuss the future vision for the digitalisation of European public administrations at all levels of government.

Honourable Members,

The ISA<sup>2</sup> Programme supports the development of digital solutions that make it possible for public administrations, businesses and citizens in Europe to benefit from interoperable cross-border and cross-sector public services. It aims to:

- ensure that activities to accelerate interoperability are well coordinated at EU level;
- develop and operate solutions for the public administrations on the basis of what businesses and citizens need;
- put in place the necessary instruments to boost interoperability at EU and national level, such as:
  - a revised European Interoperability Framework (EIF);
  - a revised European Interoperability Strategy (EIS);
  - the European Interoperability Reference Architecture (EIRA);
  - the assessment of the ICT implications of proposed or adopted Union law;

The European Commission adopted its report on the results of the interim evaluation of the ISA<sup>2</sup> Programme on the 23rd September 2019.



Based on data collected from 129 consulted stakeholders, extensive desk research, and expert assessments, the interim evaluation confirms that the ISA<sup>2</sup> performs well in all the evaluation criteria: Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Coherence, EU added value, utility and sustainability.

- The objectives pursued by ISA<sup>2</sup> are pertinent, and the results achieved so far are aligned with its objectives.
- The programme implementation is progressing as planned, with strong internal coherence among the various ISA<sup>2</sup> actions.
- The users' satisfaction with the ISA<sup>2</sup> solutions – like EUSurvey, Joinup, LEOS (supporting the drafting of legislation) – is positive.
- The programme has reinforced its links with other EU programmes, such as the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF), Horizon 2020 or the Structural Reform Support Programme, which often reuse or promote the take-up of the ISA<sup>2</sup> solutions.
- ISA<sup>2</sup> also interacts with initiatives such as the Single Digital Gateway, the Digital Single Market Strategy, the eGovernment Action Plan, the Tallinn Declaration on eGovernment, and the rolling plan for ICT standardisation.
- Stakeholders in particular agree on the EU added value of the programme.

The ISA<sup>2</sup> plays a central role in improving the interoperability landscape in the EU and its absence would jeopardise the efforts of European public administrations to improve interoperability and to foster the ICT-based modernisation of the public sector in Europe.

Of course, there are areas for possible improvement. For instance, we should focus more on raising awareness beyond national administrations, towards regional and local administrations. Thus, our ISA<sup>2</sup> team is working on targeted promotional activities to emphasise the benefits of (re)using the interoperability solutions developed under ISA<sup>2</sup>.

An example of this is the Interoperability Academy initiative, which we launched in December 2019 in cooperation with the University of Leuven. It aims to encourage public administrations, academia and interested professionals to share best practices among themselves.



This year, we would like to extend this initiative and invite you to take an active part in it.

So what comes next?

We are convinced that when ISA<sup>2</sup> ends, we must preserve what the programme has achieved and use this as the new basis to build and shape fully digitalised public administrations across our Union, as an essential foundation and enabler of a Europe fit for digital.

Technological advancements give us the means like never before to reach out to the citizens. Thanks to technology, we can address the needs of citizens and of communities, in particular the most vulnerable and excluded. In this sense, digital has the potential to transform public administrations and enable them to deliver their services in a stable, reliable and secure manner, with a citizen-driven approach at their core.

This is an opportunity for an unprecedented quality leap for the European public sector, and it is in our hands to seize this opportunity.

With this perspective, Commissioner Johannes Hahn received the mission to champion the objective of Digitalising European Public Administrations, starting by the European Commission itself.

The Commission will lead by example. Our own digital transformation is a unique opportunity to exploit the potential of digitalisation, to create innovative solutions for a more trustworthy, effective, efficient, transparent and secure Commission.

In this, we will concentrate on actions that will accelerate this transformation so that the Commission becomes a digital organisation, ready for the challenges of the digital era. The Digital Strategy and the Synergies and Efficiencies initiative have set a roadmap to build a digital eco-system by 2022 with the following features: secure by design, privacy by design, interoperable by design, digital by default, cross-border by default and open by default.

Further, we aim to use the internal digital Commission agenda at the service of the reform of the European public administrations. Most systems in the European Commission link our institution to the Member States, enabling data exchange and services in different policy domains.



For instance, interoperability is seen as a priority in sectors like transport, border control and security, justice and health. The harmonisation of digital infrastructures and standards, the adoption of and reuse of building block solutions and interoperability models are crucial drivers of digitisation to build cross border digital services.

Therefore, it is important these priorities be reflected in the next MFF so that we can continue to assess and promote existing common specifications and standards, create new ones if needed, and oversee the implementation of the European Interoperability Framework.

Our vision is to accelerate and improve the digitalisation of public administrations across the Union. This is valid for the European Commission, for the European Institutions and for European public administrations at all levels.

Our main priority must be to simplify complex processes citizens have to deal with in their daily lives, for example cross border tax declarations, electronic ID, register themselves in a different Member State, applying for social security benefits, etc. Digital public administrations will allow citizens and businesses all over Europe to fully benefit from digital public services, regardless of where they come from or where they live or work. Well-functioning digital public administrations will also cut red tape for businesses, contributing to a dynamic and competitive internal market.

For all these reasons, we come to you today, to open paths of cooperation, as we consider that the role of the European Parliament to achieve these objectives is crucial.

I therefore end by concluding that we would like to work with you and listen to your proposals, learn from your experience in your constituencies and invite you to join efforts with us to make all this happen.

Thank you very much