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Digital Single Market

DSM blog post

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DG Connect measures itself: we need your help on our metrics!

DG Connect has just launched a public online consultation on the way its various organisational divisions intend to use qualitative and quantitative data to measure efforts and outcomes in their respective domains. This unique transparent initiative needs your views to enable improvement of our work!

[Protagoras](#) ^[1], one of the earliest sophists of Ancient Greece, was the author of the famous saying: "*Man is the measure of all things; of what is, that it is; of what is not, that it is not*". I like this sentence very much, no matter putting it into philosophy, religion, science, or even law - I interpret it as "*Everything we do must be measured against the standard of whether it increases the health, wealth and life chances of people*".

[DG](#) ^[2] [Connect](#) ^[2] has just launched a [public consultation](#) ^[3] on its analysis and measurement - what we call internally our "metrics".

Our stakeholders might wonder: "**Why does a public sector organisation like [DG Connect](#) ^[2] need to use metrics?**" Well, there are several arguments: first, metrics can be a **useful tool for management** by enabling Directors and Heads of Unit to identify improvement opportunities; second, metrics could **enable outside stakeholders to better understand** the relative efficiency and effectiveness of different organisations involved in the management of digital knowledge; finally, by providing greater transparency and accountability, metrics might **increase overall confidence in the organisation and thus increase the engagement of its stakeholders**.

[DG Connect](#) ^[2] has not the pretention of offering a unique approach, writing a comprehensive treaty on evidence-driven policy making, or knowing everything about the way to analyse and measure its efforts and its outcomes. But it has the resolve and resilience to sustain the challenge of **sharing its vision, objectives and methodology** in all the domains that correspond to its mission. Even more, it nurtures the ambition of co-creating with its stakeholders who have differing perspectives the conversational relations that will be used to support its thrust for operational excellence. Such a **commitment to co-creation** can happen in different ways but the sooner it is introduced into the process, the better.

When the former Directorate General Information Society and Media ([DG INFSO](#) [4]) became on 1st July 2012 the Directorate General for Communications Networks, Content and Technology ([DG Connect](#) [2]), many people just noted a mere, opportune change of name while it was actually **the crystallisation in a new name of a profound commitment to making the DG a model of a lean and modern public administration.** [DG Connect](#) [2] is resolutely looking for new ways of working and for tapping into its wellspring of creativity in order to meet the targets of the [Digital Agenda for Europe](#) [5] (DAE) and achieve the goals of [Smart Regulation](#) [6]. Operating at the cutting-edge of ICT, **DG Connect aims at being more focused, skilled, connected and flexible.** The metrics exercise is in this respect a new approach to help us work on the basis of evidence with quantified key performance indicators, making explicit our expected impacts and benchmarking our progress.



[1]

Units in [DG Connect](#) [2] are not distinct groups of motivated and skilled civil servants working on specific domains - they are genuine teams of technology and management enthusiasts devoted to coming together for the same enduring cause - **making Europe a better place to live and work and fairly distributing scientific and technological ICT advances.**

This is why our metrics for success are now our focuses!

I do not hesitate to say that the metrics challenge for [DG Connect](#) [2] is awesome. Just consider that the DG is organised around 9 Directorates and 49 organisational divisions (including 46 units) - each organisational division is defining each year 4 priorities and each priority is supported by a *fiche* describing the resources, outputs, results and impacts that are associated with it. Over the last six months, the design of the metrics process in [DG Connect](#) [2] has been an exciting journey, but also very stretching for the staff - we were so ingrained into the previous culture of hierarchical and silo mentality and of vertical and horizontal management layering... **The creation of [DG Connect](#) [2] has marked a resolve to implement a flatter, networked structure where the colleagues with the best data and the most creative knowledge are fully empowered.** In our faster-moving environment, the hierarchical structures and organisational processes we have used for decades are no longer up to the task of being relevant, efficient and effective. Against this backdrop, [DG Connect](#) [2] ambitions to establish a sense of urgency, develop a change vision, create a

guiding community around its new social media type intranet, communicate its vision for buy-in - both within the Commission and in its relations with outside stakeholders - and incorporate changes into the culture. In order to meet that ambition, [DG Connect](#) [2] is committed to facilitate knowledge creation and exchange, unleash the creative talents of staff, and ensure a better integration of R&D, innovation, policy, and regulation.

Such a change of structure and culture would not make sense if it were not supported by a commitment to analyse and measure performance that goes beyond hype. Our metrics strategy is now in place. No doubt its continual implementation and evaluation will be even more challenging!

We are aware that much more needs to be done to ensure that this strategy can fulfil its true potential. This is why we need your help and inspiration.

It is not a coincidence that this analysis and measurement exercise happens now. I already stressed what is obvious to all of us: we constantly see unprecedented advances in ICT and phenomenal changes in our working environments. But beyond that, it is worth reminding that our Directorate General has reached its full maturity. Established at the end of 1986 on the foundations of the old "Information Technology and Telecommunications Task Force", DG XIII became the hub of EU IT&T policy formulation. Then, in 1999, while it was reaching teenage, DG XIII became DG INFSO to mark its commitment to the Information Society strategy (launched in 1994), operating for that purpose a structure based on four pillars: R&D (i.e. the Framework Programme), Innovation (i.e. the ICT Policy Support Programme part of the Competitiveness and Innovation framework Programme), Policy (i.e. the eEurope and i2010 actions), and Regulation (e.g. Roaming, Privacy in electronic communications, Radio Spectrum). [DG Connect](#) [2] is today 26 years old and can take pride in its accomplishments.

But it also needs to use its maturity to look to the future.

We want an interactive Directorate General that do the right things and do things right.

The metrics strategy is a key instrument for that. In addition, it is implemented at the very moment when the Commission is fully committed to furthering its efforts to advance the agenda on [Smart Regulation](#) [6], in particular by reducing the overall EU regulatory burden as part of the Europe 2020 agenda for growth. DG Connect's analysis and measurement will not only provide the human and financial resources involved in the implementation of its interventions (inputs) and the deliverables produced by these interventions (outputs), it will also describe the effects of interventions on society, whether they are initial (results) or longer-term, positive or negative, foreseen or unforeseen. Every Unit of [DG Connect](#) [2] will in this respect give an indication of what are the specific [Europe 2020](#) [7] targets and the [Digital Agenda targets](#) [8] which it aims at.

The [survey](#) [9] includes two main parts: a short set of questions on the survey itself (its reason of being and its potential utility) and a set of questions about each of our priorities.

[Now, please opt in by completing the survey](#) [9]! For, in doing so, you will mark your engagement in a special way with a fresh burst of momentum and inspiration, you will become a co-creator of value for implementing the vision of [DG Connect](#) [2], and you will boost the motivation of [DG Connect](#) [2] staff to do their utmost to hit their targets and serve better European citizens and businesses.

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Links

- [1] <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Protagoras>
- [2] http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/connect/index_en.htm
- [3] <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/news/help-us-improve-our-analysis-and-measurement>
- [4] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Directorate_General_for_Communications_Networks_Content_and_Technology
- [5] <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/>
- [6] http://ec.europa.eu/governance/better_regulation/index_en.htm
- [7] http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/index_en.htm
- [8] <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/our-targets>
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