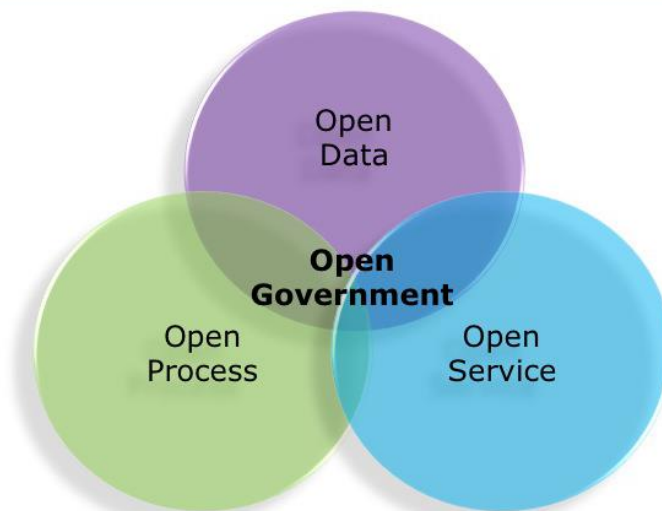




European  
Commission

# Towards faster implementation and uptake of open government



## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY – ENGLISH**

A study prepared for the European Commission

DG Communications Networks, Content & Technology by:



**This study was carried out for the European Commission by**



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study aimed at providing input to the European Commission to support the new dynamically evolving eGovernment Action Plan 2016-2020. In addition, the study aimed at providing support on how to make the new eGovernment Action Plan more open and include citizen participation in the process. The study consists of four major parts, which will be described below.

### **I. Report on the current landscape of innovative, open and collaborative government in Europe**

The first part of the study provides a definition for open government, analyses existing practices of open government in the EU institutions and EU Member States, and presents an analysis of digital enablers, drivers and barriers related to implementing an open government approach. Based on the analysis of existing literature, the following definition of open government is proposed:

*Open government refers to public administrations breaking down existing silos, opening up and sharing assets - making data, services and decisions open – enabling collaboration and increasing participative forms of service- and policy design, production and delivery. It is based on the principles of **transparency**, **collaboration**, and **participation**; functioning within an open governance framework.*

According to the definition, open government is about opening up government to the whole of society via increased interaction with citizens, businesses and other public administrations in the areas of public policy, public services, and government assets. Government assets refer to intellectual property such as government data, software, technical specifications, etc. Open government requires elements such as transparency of government, participation in policy making, increased collaboration on the design and delivery of public services, and an increased reuse of government assets. Governments hope that by adopting an open government approach they can increase citizen's trust in governments, make better public policies, release better public services, and unlock the economic potential of government assets.

The first part of the study also contains a mapping of the current landscape of innovative, open and collaborative government in Europe. The mapping of 395 practices of open government, of which many practices are also represented in the 'Analysis of the value of new generation of eGovernment services' [EC15a], are available via this web application<sup>1</sup>. Some general conclusions based on this dataset are presented below, however, it is important to mention that our dataset may not be representative for the entire European landscape and the conclusions can therefore only be seen as indicative at best. Therefore, based on our dataset, the following conclusions can be made:

- There are practices of open government in all 28 EU Member States and in the EU institutions;
- The majority of practices are about opening up government assets and public services;

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<sup>1</sup> <http://opengov.testproject.eu/>

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- All phases of the delivery lifecycle (design, implement, monitor and evaluate) are represented;
  - Most practices cover the executive branch of the government;
  - The majority of practices are delivered by national public administrations;
  - Practices can be found in all sectors of government;
  - Open engagement is mostly delivered by national authorities and non-governmental organisations; and
  - Opening up towards other public administrations is done for different reasons than when public administrations open up third parties.

Via desk research, a comprehensive summary of **digital enablers, drivers, and barriers** related to open government has been compiled. This analysis has been complemented with interviews with key government stakeholders. Digital enablers are reusable building blocks that can be used by public administrations or third-parties to compose new digital public services or support open policy making. The following digital enablers have been identified for open government:

- Authentic sources and open data;
- Reusable or shared solution building blocks; and
- Standards and technical specifications.

Drivers are the main motivations for public administrations to adopt an innovative, collaborative, open government approach. The following seven drivers have been identified:

- Democratic aspects: better control of government and better policy making;
- Better quality of service and enhanced user experience;
- Social benefits and public value;
- Cost efficiency;
- Economic growth and jobs;
- International mobility; and
- Demand from civil society and/or business associations.

Last, we have identified the barriers which are factors that discourage public administrations to adopt an innovative, collaborative, open government approach. The following 14 barriers have been identified:

- Lack of leadership and political commitment;
- Inertia of the status quo;
- Lack of financial resources;
- Lack of institutional and individual capabilities and skills;
- Legal constraints;
- Uncertainties regarding sustainability and business model issues;
- Legal uncertainties regarding responsibility and accountability;
- Poor data quality;
- Lack of representativeness;
- Multilingualism;
- Lack of common standards and specifications (interoperability);
- Perceived loss of control;
- Difficulties identifying and creating demand from citizens and businesses;
- Lack of trust; and
- False or unrealistic expectations.

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## **II. Recommendations on the effective policy mix**

The second part of the study proposes a concrete set of policy instruments to foster the uptake of open government. These policy instruments were identified based on the analysis of practices and the interviews with key stakeholders and address several high-level policy objectives for open government. To reach each of these high-level objectives, the following recommendations have been made, each of them supporting a different high-level policy objective.

Objective: A more transparent functioning of government:

- Recommendation 1: Take further legislative action on 'access to information';
- Recommendation 2: Prioritise and follow-up on commitments for publishing government information of high democratic value; and
- Recommendation 3: Align practices for government records management.

Objective: Better policy making via enhanced participation:

- Recommendation 4: Prioritise and make commitments on participation in policy making; and
- Recommendation 5: Enhance usage of participatory ICT to enhance youth-government communication and interaction.

Objective: Better (digital) public services via enhanced collaboration:

- Recommendation 6: Take further legislative action to reinforce the once-only principle;
- Recommendation 7: Identify the ICT standards and technical specifications that can define stable interfaces for digital public services;
- Recommendation 8: Develop and apply open methodologies, licence agreements, and methodologies for collaborative public service design; and
- Recommendation 9: Collaborate to build a shared infrastructures of reusable, decomposed digital services based on open standards.

Objective: Unlocking the economic potential of government assets:

- Recommendation 10: Prioritise to make high-value datasets and other intellectual property open for reuse; and
- Recommendation 11: Support new data ecosystems.

Objective: Supporting the update of open government in general:

- Recommendation 12: Develop an action plan for open government; and
- Recommendation 13: Create a community feeling, disseminate practices and experts, organise meet-ups.

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### **III. Report on the methodology for the design and implementation of the new dynamically evolving eGovernment Action Plan and its supporting digital platform**

The new eGovernment Action Plan 2016-2020 emphasises the major role of stakeholders' participation in the definition of actions selected to be part of the eGovernment Action Plan. Specifically, the new eGovernment Action Plan 2016-2020 provides citizens, businesses, organisations and public administrations with a means to come forward and express their needs for eGovernment on a stakeholders consultation platform, propose new eGovernment services at the European, national or even regional level, and have the opportunity to collaborate on the proposals for actions to address these needs. Their proposed solutions will be then examined and can be selected for implementation by several Member States and/or European Commission DGs. Furthermore, stakeholders have access to the results of monitoring and evaluation on the benefits of individual actions which are made publicly available on the stakeholders' consultation platform.

The methodology to support the processes and interactions implied by the dynamically evolving eGovernment Action Plan focuses on defining the actors involved in the Action Plan and assigning their responsibilities, envisioning the mechanisms and tools needed to engage the stakeholders to share and discuss eGovernment needs, to work on eGovernment solutions and to receive feedback on their work. The methodology also ensures a transparent approach for the selection of proposed actions and the monitoring of the selected actions' benefits through measurable indicators. Importantly, the methodology entails collaboration between public administrations at regional and national levels and between public administrations from different Member States and DGs. Positive outcomes of such collaborations are the exchanges of experiences, good practices and lessons learned in eGovernment, the reuse of existing solutions, and by consequence a means to achieve comparable levels of eGovernment services across the EU. Finally, the methodology provides recommendations for the evaluation of eGovernment Action Plan in its integrity allowing setting targets based on objectives and following the evolution of eGovernment from year to year.

### **IV. Stakeholder engagement and communication plan**

The stakeholder engagement and communication plan was the last part in this study towards a faster implementation and uptake of open government. This stakeholder engagement and communication plan aims at helping the European Commission to:

- Inform stakeholders about the content and evolution of the Action Plan;
- Create a broad coverage in the different European Member States and create awareness regarding the eGovernment Action Plan and the Futurium platform in public administrations, but also in the non-public sector;
- Attract citizens and organisations, both governmental as non-governmental, to the Futurium platform in order to engage and share opinions and propose new ideas for action in order to improve the public sector;
- Bring people together and create a community to encourage collaboration and to leverage people's skills/knowledge to bring real change to the public life; and

- Keep people involved and interested over the entire lifetime of the eGovernment Action Plan 2016-2020.

In order to reach these goals, several steps were undertaken to answer questions like who must be contacted, what will be the key messages to get across, when do you need to contact your stakeholders and how are you going to communicate with them?

**Who?** - In order to communicate and engage with your stakeholders it is important to get to know them. During the study several stakeholders were identified and several locations/methods were pointed out to find more stakeholders or where the European Commission could leverage stakeholders from other organisations. In addition, it is advised to use the networks of other organisations to your advantage. By using other organisations as multipliers it is possible to further extend the reach of your message.

Next to identifying stakeholders, stakeholders were classified in order to customize the messages to the appropriate stakeholders. Stakeholders were classified according to: Organisation type, the influence and interest of the stakeholders by making use of the influence-interest matrix and the digitisation and penetration rate in each Member State, based on the results of the eGovernment Benchmark Insights Report [EC15b].

In order to get a better understanding of your stakeholders identify their motivations and frustrations. Stakeholder motivations are the psychological drivers that make stakeholders contribute to the dynamically evolving eGovernment Action Plan. While stakeholder frustrations are the psychological barriers that would prevent stakeholders to contribute to the eGovernment Action Plan.

Motivations	Frustrations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognition</li> <li>• Political influence</li> <li>• Financial compensation</li> <li>• Knowledge</li> <li>• Networking and creating value</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Noise</li> <li>• Perceived difficulty of reaching a political consensus</li> <li>• Lack of perceived progress</li> <li>• Lack of funding / unfair funding</li> <li>• Lack of feedback</li> <li>• Negative feedback</li> <li>• False expectations of scope and purpose</li> <li>• Lack of structure and facilitation</li> <li>• Lack of usability</li> <li>• Lack of inclusion</li> <li>• Lack of information</li> </ul>

**What?** - The eGovernment Action Plan is a useful way to frame the new actions to implement in the different Member States. However, talking about the eGovernment Action Plan and its purpose will not inspire stakeholders. Showing concrete examples (practices, open government leaders) in different Member States and providing a proof-of-concept will inspire them. Indicate for each inspiring example to which principles of the eGovernment Action Plan they relate to (digital by default, once only principle, inclusiveness & accessibility, openness & transparency, cross-border by default, interoperability by default and trustworthiness & security). This indicates the

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alignment with the eGovernment Action Plan. Next to that it shows them concrete benefits that can be realised by implementing these actions. Additionally, inspiring examples must be provided to inspire on a European level, but also on a national, regional and local level and they must not only relate to public administrations but also to businesses and civil society.

Next, it is important to make sure stakeholders understand the process, for example through an infographic, in order to avoid confusion in the future. An infographic is a visual representation of the process that will be followed on the Futurium platform. The infographic explains to stakeholders how the process for the eGovernment Action Plan works, how the process starts from submitting needs to proposing actions to enable change, but also how the selection of actions works and who will be responsible for each of these steps. In addition, the infographic should be complemented with a short summary of each step in the process that in layman's terms explains how the dynamic eGovernment Action Plan works and who is responsible during each phase of the process.

Finally, display the progress to the stakeholders, therefore all actions should be monitored and evaluated. Not only to show whether the actions are still going according to plan, but more importantly to put them in the spotlight and increase their visibility.

**When?** – This section explains when to communicate and engage with stakeholders. Based on the digitisation and penetration rate in the different Member States it was possible to identify which stakeholders have to be reached in order to make the eGovernment Action Plan a success. This classification allows to focus the attention and resources to a limited amount of stakeholders instead of spending it all on all stakeholders at once. In addition a high-level cycle of communication milestones was provided.

**How?** - Finally a list of methods was provided that can be used to attract stakeholders, going from sending out newsletters, organising and attending conferences to organising an entire eGovernment Action Month in order to put the eGovernment Action Plan more in the spotlight. These methods allow to share the key messages and increase the involvement of public administrations, businesses and civil society in the eGovernment Action Plan. In addition, these methods can be tailored to reach different stakeholders in different Member States and as a result customize the approach to the different stakeholder groups.



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