Digital Public Administration factsheet 2020

Latvia

ISA²

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1 | Country Profile

1 Country Profile

1.1 Basic data

Population: 1 919 968 inhabitants (2019)
GDP at market prices: 30 476 million Euros (2019)
GDP per inhabitant in PPS (Purchasing Power Standard EU 27=100): 69 (2019)
GDP growth rate: 2.2%
Inflation rate: 2.7%
Unemployment rate: 6.3%
General government gross debt (Percentage of GDP): 36.9% (2019)
General government deficit/surplus (Percentage of GDP): 1.7% (2019)
Area: 64 562 km²
**Capital city**: Riga
Official EU language: Latvian
Currency: EUR

Source: Eurostat (last update: 24 April 2020)

1.2 Digital Public Administration Indicators

The following graphs present data for the latest Generic Information Society Indicators for Latvia compared to the EU average. Statistical indicators in this section reflect those of Eurostat at the time the Edition is being prepared.

Percentage of individuals using the Internet for interacting with public authorities in Latvia

Percentage of individuals using the Internet for obtaining information from public authorities in Latvia

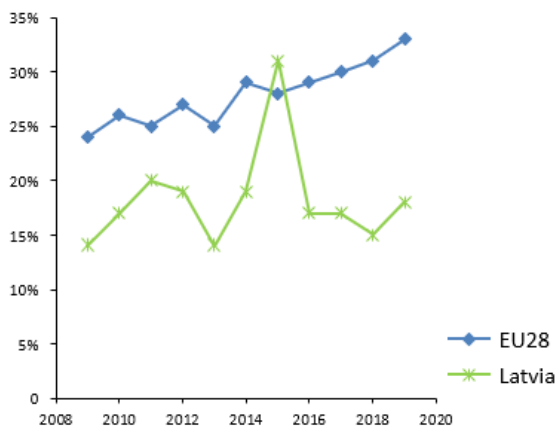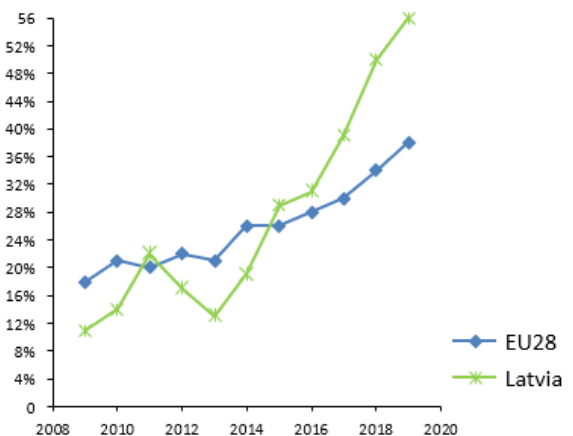Source: Eurostat Information Society Indicators
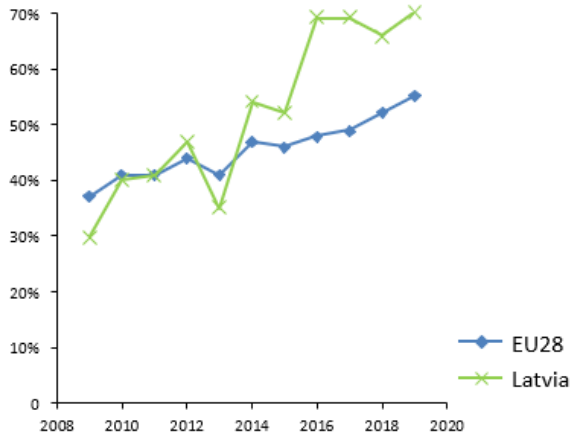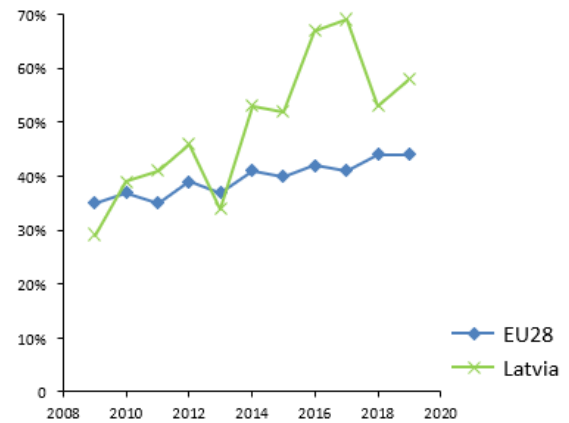
Source: Eurostat Information Society Indicators

Percentage of individuals using the Internet for downloading official forms from public authorities in Latvia
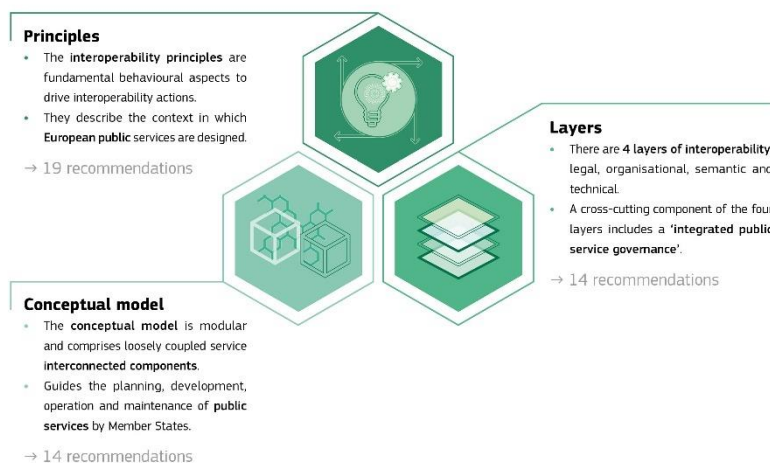
Percentage of individuals using the Internet for sending filled forms to public authorities in Latvia

Source: Eurostat Information Society Indicators

Source: Eurostat Information Society Indicators

1.3 Interoperability State of Play

In 2017, the European Commission published the European Interoperability Framework (EIF) to give specific guidance on how to set up interoperable digital public services through a set of 47 recommendations. The picture below represents the three pillars of the EIF around which the EIF Monitoring Mechanism was built to evaluate the level of implementation of the EIF within the Member States. It is based on a set of 68 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) clustered within the three main pillars of the EIF (Principles, Layers and Conceptual model), outlined below.

Principles
- The **interoperability principles** are fundamental behavioural aspects to drive interoperability actions.
- They describe the context in which **European public** services are designed.

→ 19 recommendations

Layers
- There are **4 layers of interoperability**: legal, organisational, semantic and technical.
- A cross-cutting component of the four layers includes a **'integrated public service governance'**.

→ 14 recommendations

Conceptual model
- The **conceptual model** is modular and comprises loosely coupled service **interconnected components**.
- Guides the planning, development, operation and maintenance of **public services** by Member States.

→ 14 recommendations

Source: European Interoperability Framework Monitoring Mechanism 2019

For each of the three pillars, a different scoreboard was created to breakdown the results into their main components (i.e. the 12 principles of interoperability, the interoperability layers and the components of the conceptual model). The components are evaluated on a scale from one to four, where one means a lower level of implementation, while 4 means a higher level of implementation. The graph below shows the result of the first EIF Monitoring Mechanism data collection for Latvia in 2019. It is possible to notice an overall good performance of the country, with particularly positive results within the first scoreboard (Interoperability principles). The main area of improvement is the element of security and privacy related to the conceptual model for integrated public services provision.
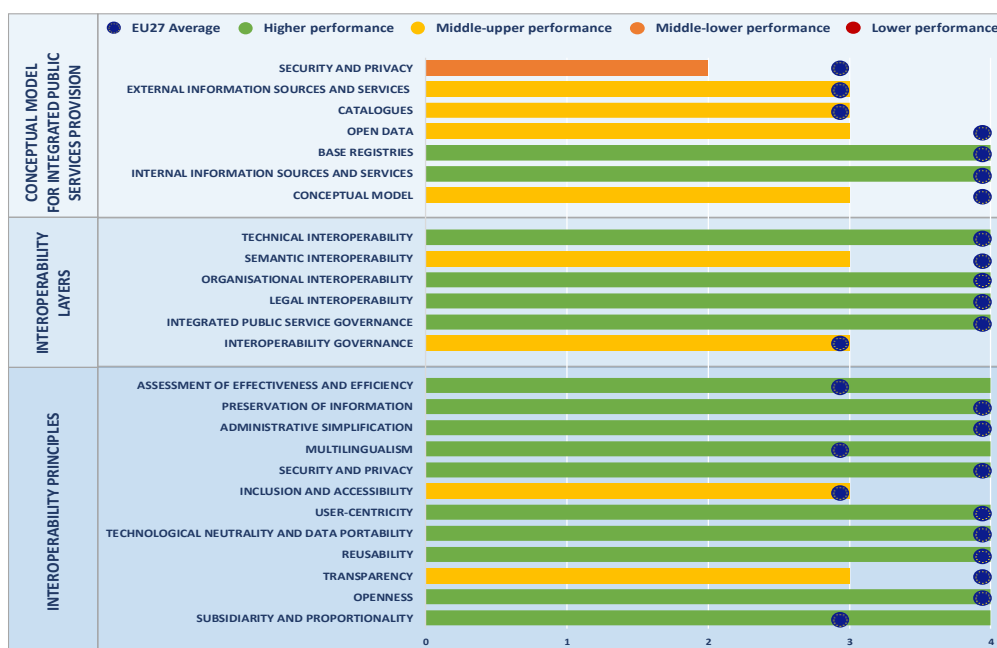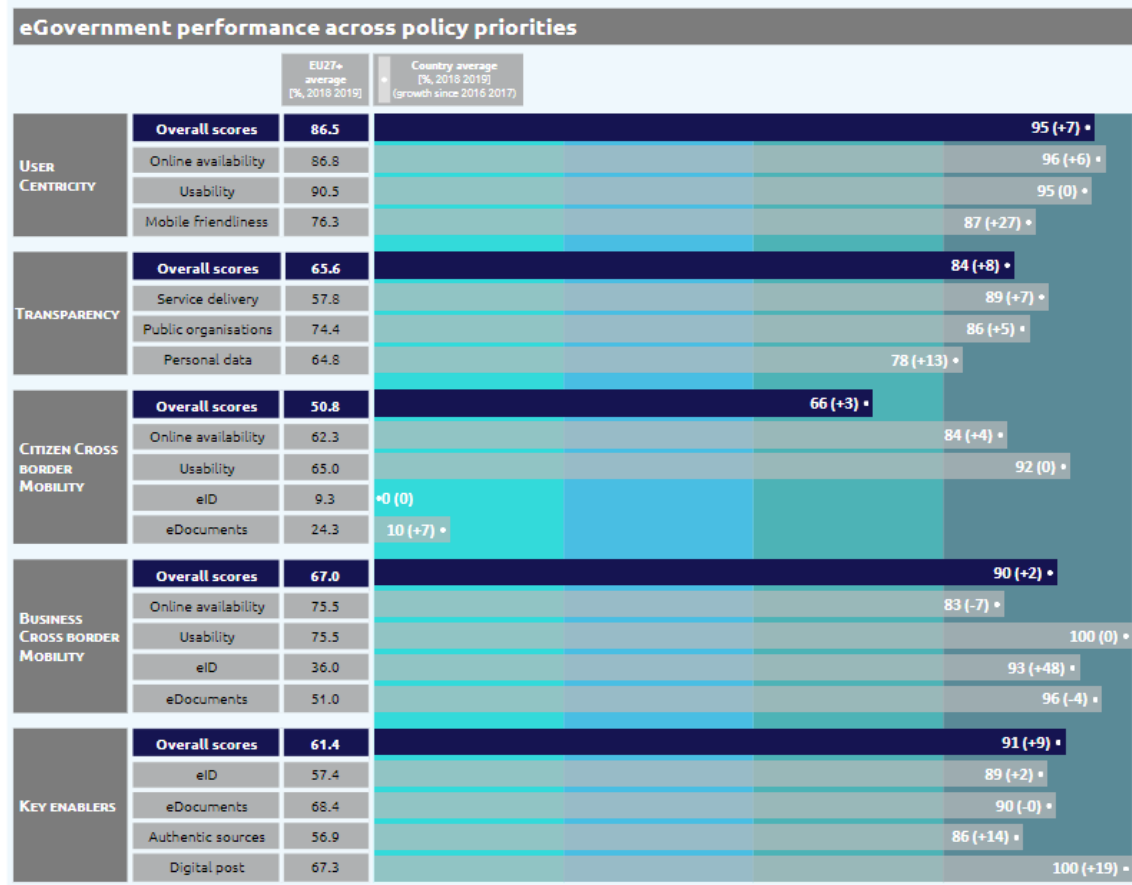

Source: European Interoperability Framework Monitoring Mechanism 2019

1.4 eGovernment State of Play

The graph below is the result of the latest eGovernment Benchmark report, which evaluates the priority areas of the eGovernment Action Plan 2016-2020, based on specific indicators. These indicators are clustered within four main top-level benchmarks:

- **User Centricity** – indicates the extent to which a service is provided online, its mobile friendliness and usability of the service (in terms of available online support and feedback mechanisms).

- **Transparency** – indicates the extent to which governments are transparent about (i) the process of service delivery, (ii) the responsibilities and performance of public organisations and (iii) the personal data processed in public services.

- **Cross-Border Mobility** – indicates the extent to which users of public services from another European country can use the online services.

- **Key Enablers** – indicates the extent to which technical and organisational pre-conditions for eGovernment service provision are in place, such as electronic identification and authentic sources.

The 2020 report presents the biennial results, achieved over the past two years of measurement of all eight life events used to measure the above-mentioned top-level benchmarks. More specifically, these life events are divided between six 'Citizen life events' (Losing and finding a job, Studying, Family life, all measured in 2012, 2014, 2016 and 2018, and Starting a small claim procedure, Moving, Owning a car, all measured in 2013, 2015, 2017 and 2019) and two 'Business life events' (Business start-up, measured in 2012, 2014, 2016 and 2018, and Regular business operations, measured in 2013, 2015, 2017 and 2019).

eGovernment performance across policy priorities		EU27+ average [%, 2018 2019]	Country average [%, 2018 2019] (growth since 2016 2017)	
USER CENTRICITY	Overall scores	86.5	95 (+7) •	
	Online availability	86.8	96 (+6) •	
	Usability	90.5	95 (0) •	
	Mobile friendliness	76.3	87 (+27) •	
TRANSPARENCY	Overall scores	65.6	84 (+8) •	
	Service delivery	57.8	89 (+7) •	
	Public organisations	74.4	86 (+5) •	
	Personal data	64.8	78 (+13) •	
CITIZEN CROSS BORDER MOBILITY	Overall scores	50.8	66 (+3) •	
	Online availability	62.3	84 (+4) •	
	Usability	65.0	92 (0) •	
	eID	9.3	0 (0)	
	eDocuments	24.3	10 (+7) •	
BUSINESS CROSS BORDER MOBILITY	Overall scores	67.0	90 (+2) •	
	Online availability	75.5	83 (-7) •	
	Usability	75.5	100 (0) •	
	eID	36.0	93 (+48) •	
	eDocuments	51.0	96 (-4) •	
KEY ENABLERS	Overall scores	61.4	91 (+9) •	
	eID	57.4	89 (+2) •	
	eDocuments	68.4	90 (-0) •	
	Authentic sources	56.9	86 (+14) •	
	Digital post	67.3	100 (+19) •	

Source: eGovernment Benchmark Report 2020 Country Factsheets

2 | Digital Public Administration Highlights

2 Digital Public Administration Highlights

Digital Public Administration Political Communications

The Digital Transformation Guidelines 2021-2027 are currently in the development phase, the document is going to continue the digitalisation policy set out in the "Information Society Development Strategy 2014-2020". The new digital strategy will define priority directions for action, including for the digital transformation of the economy. The government platforms, processes and services are an integral part of the National digital infrastructure. In addition, data should become integrated assets to stimulate further development of the digital economy, with open government digital platforms becoming catalysts for the digitalisation of SME businesses in particular.

Digital Public Administration Legislation

Electronic Governance Law is currently being reviewed by Parliament and is supposed to replace the Law of State Information Systems in near future. The new law will significantly expand the scope of the Electronic Governance legislating, developing legal basis for more efficient government ICT operations, including concept of specialised shared service centres in addition to the current federal by government departments (Ministries) – partly centralised government ICT governance model.

Digital Public Administration Governance

Regarding developments in terms of governance, the current national policy is focusing on the strengthening of specialized shared services capabilities, delivered by internal services providers. The development of specialised shared service centres is Latvia's current top priority. In addition to shared platform services (Electronic Procurement, Government Electronic Services Portal and its component services, Registered Electronic Delivery (Official eAddress service)), Government Private Cloud services, provided by Latvia's State Radio and Television Centre as a shared services provider, are becoming the second success story in this area, facilitating modernisation and consolidation of government ICT infrastructure assets.

Digital Public Administration Infrastructure

The individual digital tools are available free of charge for all residents of Latvia. In addition to the high and substantial assurance level of electronic identification means including National eID card, mobile eID means and qualified electronic signature means, it is now being complemented by the individual accounts of Registered Electronic Delivery – eAddress. Our latest development in eID area – Latvia's eID means published by European Commission as notified in December 2019, are already being accepted for cross-border eServices by Croatia, Portugal, Spain and Estonia – well ahead of the schedule requested by eIDAS regulation.

3

Digital Public Administration Political Communications

3 Digital Public Administration Political Communications

3.1 Specific political communications on digital public administration

Information Society Development Guidelines

The Information Society Development Guidelines for 2014-2020 were elaborated to ensure continuity of existing policies and to determine the priorities in the area of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for the European Union Structural Funds Programming period 2014-2020.

The guidelines were developed in close cooperation with the ICT industry, national ICT associations, the Latvian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Latvian Confederation of Employers, the Latvian national UNESCO committee, representatives of all ministries and representatives of local (municipal) governments. The inclusion of different stakeholders involved in the development of the guidelines provides a solid ground for a 360-degree analysis of current shortcomings, as well as a thorough understanding of future development needs and priorities, following the overall objective of enhancing the national competitiveness, economic growth and job creation. The goal of the guidelines is to provide the opportunity for anyone to use ICT, to create a knowledge-based economy and to improve the overall quality of life by contributing to the national competitiveness and increasing economic growth and job creation.

Special attention is devoted in the guidelines to the implementation of the open data principle in the public administration. This principle unleashes the growth potential of the digital economy, by making data and information resources created by the public administration easily available to society, thereby establishing a precondition for the spur of new innovative, data-driven business ideas, services, and products. The other cornerstone of the guidelines is optimising operating processes in the public administration and increasing its efficiency as well as simplifying the delivery of public services, by means of efficient and effective eServices and interoperable information systems. It is expected to have an indirect, but very clear positive impact on economic growth, since eGovernment will lead to reduced administrative burden and costs for entrepreneurs, streamlining their interactions with public administration, and allowing them to spare more resources for their entrepreneurship.

Considering the national priorities in the area of Information Society, and the objectives of the European Digital Agenda, the guidelines define seven action lines.

The main priorities and action plans of the guidelines are presented below.

1. ICT education and eSkills

Activities in the field of eSkills will focus on the areas that will motivate small and medium sized enterprises as well as citizens to acquire eSkills. Planned actions include: public information campaigns, development of eSkills for both citizens and entrepreneurs, increasing the ICT competences of public administration, fostering skills of ICT practitioners and professionals to be in line with the requirements of the labour market, as well as increasing focus on algorithmic thinking (i.e. learning how programmers think by studying mathematics and computer sciences) and information literacy in educational programmes.

2. Widely available access to the internet

Actions planned under this priority include mapping of transport networks, further broadband development, and covering all elements of electronic communications network infrastructure. A detailed description of the required actions in those fields is included in the Concept for Development of the Next Generation Broadband Electronic Communications Networks for 2013-2020 (in Latvian).

3. Modern and efficient public administration

The main benefits of this action will be reflected in the improved efficiency of the public administration (decision-making process, accuracy, conformity to the real situation, the possibility of involving wide public groups in policy planning, evaluation and reduction of administrative costs) as well as the delivery of clear, timely and consistent information to citizens about their rights and the services of the public administration. Actions will create opportunities for citizens to be widely involved in decision-making and law-making processes using modern technologies. Cooperation and synergies between public and private sector services have a significant administrative burden reduction potential.

The actions for the modernisation of the public administration will be focused on the modernisation of public administration processes, public eParticipation and eDemocracy as well as ICT infrastructure optimisation. One of the focal points for eGovernment infrastructure modernisation will be the establishment of central building blocks and integration infrastructure to be used by all public administration institutions for the modernisation of public service delivery and for connecting the national eGovernment infrastructure to cross-border platforms. Another focus is on open interfaces (APIs) allowing also third-party developers to develop end-user applications for government services as well as their own products and services using government data.

4. eServices and digital content for the public

Digital content has an increasingly crucial role in the country's economic and social development. Digital content plays a key role in research and education as well as in the cultural and the public administration sector services. eGovernment solutions enable institutions to offer the citizens more accessible and convenient public services, including education and health services, cultural and educational content, and create conditions for a better business environment and social processes.

A series of actions are planned within this stream of activity:
- opening public administration data and transaction services to other users;
- developing shared platforms and re-usable software components and modules for providing public services;
- implementing an official electronic address for citizens and entrepreneurs;
- delivering and accepting automated electronic invoices;
- promoting the digitisation of and the accessibility to the cultural heritage as well as the digitisation of public services;
- encouraging the use of the Latvian language in the digital environment;
- efficient implementation of eHealth solutions for safe and patient-centred health care.

5. Cross-border cooperation for the Digital Single Market

By virtue of the free movement of people, goods and services, Latvia is a part of the Digital Single Market. To provide cross-border cooperation in the Digital Single Market, free movement of goods and services as well as the free flow of citizens, national eGovernment solutions should be able to interoperate with the EU solutions (building blocks provided by EU projects such as eSENS, STORK, PEPPOL etc.). Accordingly, actions are planned to ensure that the national eGovernment solutions are interoperable with EU platforms and their content is compatible with cross-border services and solutions for exchange of information across different sectors.

6. ICT research and innovation

Investments in innovation, research and development are crucial also for the companies whose products and services are subject to even faster technological and process rate changes in the digital age. The sectors involved are: ICT research in computer science, information technology, electronics, telecommunications, communication studies as well as innovative support for companies developing new ICT products and technologies, and support for the development and establishment of new innovative companies. The development of technology transfer systems must be seen in connection with the overall objectives of the Information Society.

7. Trust and security

A secure and reliable electronic information space, where the continuity of essential services for the public administration and the public is ensured, is an essential component for the successful development of the Information Society. An important aspect for the development of the Information Society is public trust in the electronic environment. ICT security, human safety and trust in the electronic environment are areas where further action is planned.

The implementation of the guidelines will build upon the technological potential and experience obtained in the previous period (2007-2013).

The implementation of the guidelines will be financed from the State budget as well as through the EU Structural Funds and private funding. In the long term, the implementation of the guidelines will facilitate effective and efficient use of budgetary resources for ICT, improving the efficiency of business processes, and the quality and availability of public services.

The Digital Single Market remains a keynote of the Digital Agenda for Europe. By following these guidelines, Latvia will ensure its contribution to the implementation of the Digital Agenda at the national level, as well as the development of the Digital Single Market.

Concept for the Organisational Model of Public ICT Management

On 15 January 2013, the Cabinet of Ministers approved a Concept for the Organisational Model of Public ICT Management. The implementation of this model will frame public ICT strategies, principles and scenarios that will ensure strategic coordination of public ICT development and maintenance through partly centralised management. The competence and the responsibility for ICT management will be shared between the national and sectoral levels. This optimal ICT management model identifies the main parties involved: the public ICT organisation, sectoral ICT organisations, hybrid ICT organisations, public administration senior ICT managers forum, and sectoral ICT management councils. To achieve the aim of optimal ICT management, both public and private sector resources will be used, providing effective cooperation focusing on the benefits for the public and the creation and maintenance of convenient and user-friendly eGovernment solutions.

Regular monthly meetings of public administration senior ICT managers have significantly improved cross-sectoral communication at ICT management level, providing one of the cornerstones for successful implementation of the reuse and efficient collaboration principles defined in the Conceptual Architecture of Public Administration Information Systems.

3.2 Interoperability

Conceptual Architecture of Public Administration Information Systems

On 10 March 2015, the Cabinet of Ministers approved the Conceptual Architecture of Public Administration Information Systems. The Conceptual Architecture is developed in accordance with the enterprise architecture modelling approach, covering processes

(organisation), information (data), applications (systems) and technology (ICT infrastructure) aspects of public information systems. The Conceptual Architecture defines the long-term vision for the development of public administrations and public service infrastructures, and consists of 40 recommendations, including references to more particular reusable platforms, services and reference models. On 7 January 2018, the Cabinet of Ministers adopted an Informative Statement on Progress in the implementation of the Conceptual Architecture. In addition to the progress report describing the implementation of recommendations and particular shared platforms, it contains the National Interoperability Framework document as an Annex. The purpose of the informative statement is to better align the contents of the Conceptual Architecture with the European Interoperability Framework (EIF).

3.3 Key enablers

3.3.1 Access to public information

Fourth National Action Plan for Open Government Partnership

On 4 July 2017, the Cabinet of Ministers approved the report for improving the public services environment. It included proposals for public service provision modernisation, to ensure the efficiency and comprehensive availability of public services online and offline. On 11 February 2020, the Cabinet of Ministers approved the fourth bi-annual Action Plan of Latvia to contribute to foster a global culture of open government within the Open Government Partnership. The two-year plan sets concrete steps across a broad range of issues and aims to facilitate open governance in order to take advantage of openness, accountability and public participation facilitated by digitalisation and innovation.

The plan creates a single framework for open governance initiatives in different sectors and policy areas in Latvia, to foster the openness and accountability of the government increasing the citizens' participation and trust in the public administration.

To promote open governance in Latvia, the Plan includes six commitments focused on cooperation between public institutions and society, as well as facilitating the use of open data. The commitments include: improving openness of public procurements and contracts; opening datasets relevant to freedom of information; improved regulation on representation of interests and lobbying; facilitating open governance in municipalities; effective public participation in reform processes and societal challenges; and anti-corruption measures.

The plan promotes the re-use of Latvia's open government best practices by other Open Government Partnership countries and global partners.

National Open Data Strategy

On 20 August 2019, the Cabinet of Ministers adopted the National Open Data Strategy. In general, efforts are made to strengthen democracy and move towards an open society that wants to trust its institutions; the ambitions of the Latvian government are to introduce an expanded policy of openness and transparency in the State administration. This is a step towards promoting and developing a digital society and is one of the main objectives of a data-based society initiative.

The Latvian Open Data Strategy describes the situation of open data in Latvia at the beginning of 2019, explains the establishment of principles for the implementation of the Open Data Strategy, describes the benefits and challenges of publishing data, and the factors affecting international innovation in the field of open data, and sets out the goals for the implementation of the Open Data Strategy principles and actions.

The strategy shall apply to public administrations, authorities under their responsibility and supervision, local authorities, as well as legal and natural persons of private law (hereinafter referred to collectively as "authorities") to which the performance of public administration tasks has been delegated, to the extent of the delegation. In particular,

the strategy covers all public administrations, including economic operators, associations and foundations, which perform public sector tasks on a public mission and directly relate to specific delegated public administration tasks.

One of the objectives of the strategy is to encourage the Latvian national regulatory authorities to make the data at their disposal re-usable, unless access is limited by national or international law or contracts, including data or information containing restricted access or official secrets.

The strategy identifies specific tasks for national regulatory authorities for the next three years. In carrying out these tasks, Latvia will move towards a data-based society.

3.3.2 eID and Trust Services

Electronic identification cards

On 12 January 2010, the Cabinet of Ministers of Latvia approved the Concept for Electronic Identification Cards (eID). The concept aims to introduce a new personal identification document (eID) in Latvia to ensure the verification of an individual's identity, both on-site and in an electronic environment, in compliance with the requirements set out in the EU legislation and in the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) standards. The eID card provides the possibility to authenticate a person in a digital environment, to create digital documents with legal effect (signed digitally with the qualified electronic signature built in the eID card) and to receive public services electronically.

On 8 November 2016, the Cabinet of Ministers approved the Informative Statement "On possible financing solutions for the provision of certification services in identity cards (eID) and as the single and priority means for ensuring the electronic identity of a person" in order to promote the efficient, convenient, secure and fully-fledged development of identity cards (eID). The eID will promote and guarantee safe and efficient use of the electronic environment to communicate with the public and private sectors and receive services electronically.

With the adoption of the Informative Statement, the decision was made to make the identity card (eID) a mandatory personal identification document for the entire population of Latvia after a transitional period needed to adopt changes in the related legislation.

The adoption of the Informative Statement supported a mandatory activation of the qualified electronic signature certificate needed for the creation of the electronic documents in all eID cards (which was a voluntary choice before) and granted the possibility of signing documents with the qualified electronic signature, free of charge for an unlimited of number of times.

3.3.3 Security aspects

Cybersecurity Strategy of Latvia

The Guidelines for Latvia's Cybersecurity Strategy 2019-2022 were approved in September 2019. The goal of Latvia's cybersecurity policy is to strengthen and develop cyber defence capabilities by increasing resilience to cyber-attacks and raising public awareness of cyber threats. The sub-objectives for achieving the goal of the cybersecurity policy are:
- reducing cybersecurity risks;
- developing national cyber defence capabilities;
- ensuring security of ICT infrastructure, information systems and services;
- raising public awareness of cybercrime; and
- continuing the fight against cybercrime.

The cybersecurity policy defines the following priorities: protection, deterrence and development.

3.3.4 Interconnection of base registries

Modernisation of the Natural Persons Data Service

In 2018, the Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs launched the Modernisation of the Natural Persons Data Service project (No 2.2.1.1/17/I/006) of the European Regional Development Fund. The project has several objectives:

▪ to ensure a uniform and centralised registration and recording of foreigners by the public administration;
▪ to open Latvia's electronic environment to foreigners, providing the possibility for foreigners to use the eServices of the public administration;
▪ to facilitate the management and certification of personal status;
▪ to ensure the availability of information on the status of the eAddress to a natural person, i.e. ensuring the integration with the eAddress system; to ensure the inclusion of information on the official eAddress account in the Population Register Information System; to foster the development of the Population Register Information System with a view to ensuring the quality of information required for the 2021 population census programme; and to carry out annual population assessments to support the preparation, organisation and performance of the 2021 census.

One of the activities of the Project is the development of the Information System for the Register of Natural Persons, which will be based on the existing Population Register extended to foreign nationals who enter into legal relations with the State. The development of the Information System of the Register of Natural Persons shall take place in accordance with the provisions of the Law on the Register of Natural Persons.

3.3.5 eProcurement

Integrated Electronic Procurement System

On 4 September 2012, the Cabinet of Ministers approved the Informative Statement on the need to develop an Integrated Electronic Procurement System (EPS).
The envisaged functionality of the EPS included the following elements: 1) development of the EPS platform consisting of the portal; development of a common user registration and authentication solution based on the national information system integrator; integration of the existing eCatalogue system; 2) the eCertificate subsystem to reduce administrative burden on suppliers and shorten the time of actual procurement procedures; 3) the eAuctions subsystem; 4) the eTenders subsystem to standardise the contracting processes and the documentation to be prepared for procurement, ensuring the availability of information.

3.4 Domain-specific political communications

No political communication has been adopted in this field to date.

3.5 Emerging technologies

National Blockchain Working Group

The National Blockchain Working Group was developed by the Ministry of Economics in 2018. This working group includes public sector representatives from the State Revenue Services, the Bank of Latvia, the Latvian Investment and Development Agency, the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development, the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Economics. As a result of this working group, a policy planning document was written to inform the Cabinet of Ministers about the perspectives and advantages that the blockchain technology can bring to the public and private sector. Within this document, the working group identified two potential pilot projects, which could improve operations performed by the State Revenue Services and the Registry of

Enterprises. In addition, a representative of the Ministry of Economics has been appointed to represent the Republic of Latvia within the European Blockchain Partnership Working Group. So far, the representatives of the Republic of Latvia have attended all of the working groups with the purpose of acquiring knowledge about the European Commission's initiatives towards the blockchain technology, developing a network of contacts for cross-border co-operation and providing information about the activities regarding blockchain in Latvia.

Further plans of the Ministry of Economics include greater involvement within the European Blockchain Services Infrastructure by joining the network of nodes together with the Latvian State Radio and Television Centre, which is responsible for electronic communication services in Latvia.

Blockchain hackathon

Due to the increasing importance of process and service digitalisation, in April 2019 the Ministry of Economics, in cooperation with the State Revenue Service and Startup Wise Guys, organised a hackathon for blockchain technology-based solutions. The hackathon was organised to address potential blockchain vulnerabilities in the public sector, especially involving taxation. This was the first local hackathon ever to focus on public services and blockchain technologies. Public and private sector participants developed solutions that could enable the Latvian State Revenue Services to become more digital and efficient, gaining in-depth understanding of industry needs and the opportunities brought by scalable technology product creation.

In 2020, a new policy document is being prepared for the Cabinet of Ministers to support the further development of a blockchain-based solution for eInvoicing and eReceipt processes performed by the State Revenue Services. The introduction of digital public services that reduce the bureaucratic burden on businesses and enhance the level of trust and transparency by limiting the amount of paper documentation are actions taken by the Ministry of Economics under the overarching 'Zero Paper Economy' (ZPE) initiative supporting entrepreneurs and SMEs in particular. ZPE facilitates the use and development of digital services for businesses and enhances the shift towards digital technologies. This initiative has helped shaping the digital agenda of the Ministry of Economics and taking action towards processes that will raise the level of basic digital skills for employees, educating senior level management on modern technologies (AI, 5G, blockchain) and improving the level of digitisation in SMEs and in the public sector. This will be made possible starting from 2020 through various government-supported educational programmes, specialised digital innovation hubs and financial support instruments.

National Artificial Intelligence (AI) Strategy

After signing the Declaration of Cooperation on AI in April 2018 to join forces and engage in a European approach to deal therewith, on 4 February 2020 the Cabinet of Ministers adopted the Informative Statement on the Development of the Artificial Intelligence Solutions.

The document sets out a future national policy on the use of artificial intelligence solutions and defines the way forward in promoting their use over the next three years. The report entrusts ministries with identifying the areas in which artificial intelligence can be exploited for the automation of public administration tasks.

4 | Digital Public Administration Legislation

4 Digital Public Administration Legislation

4.1 Specific legislation on digital public administration

Regulation for the Public Administration Services Portal

On 4 July 2017, the Cabinet of Ministers approved the Regulation which governs public services and the implementation of the one-stop-shop principle. The Regulation determines the manager of the Public Administration Services Portal, his/her duties and responsibilities, the duties and responsibilities of the institution, the procedure for the use and management of the public administration service portal, the procedure for the service catalogue and the information included therein.
This Regulation prescribes:
- the use and management arrangements of the Public Administration Services Portal (hereinafter – the portal);
- the duties and responsibilities of the portal keeper, as well as the national governing body's (hereinafter – the Authority) duties and responsibilities; and
- the procedures for the exchange of information between the portal manager and the Authority.

Several regulations govern the procedures for updating information in the portal to improve the availability and use of eServices.

Registration, quality control and procedures for the provision of public administration services

To improve the availability and use of eServices, several changes were made to three regulations:
- Cabinet Regulation No 399 on the registration, quality control and procedures for the provision of public administration services. This Regulation governs the registration of public administration services, quality control and the procedures for the provision of public administration services.
- Cabinet Regulation No 401 on the State and Municipal Customer Service Centre, as well as the types, range and procedures for the provision of public administration services. This Regulation governs the administration of the State and Municipal Customer Service Centre, as well as the range, types and the procedures for the provision of public services.
- Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No 402 on public administration services digitalisation. This Regulation prescribes the procedures for the digitalisation of public services and how to ensure the availability of public services.

On 4 February 2020, the Cabinet of Ministers adopted the Public Service Development Plan 2020-2023 that strengthens personalised and innovative public administration services. The plan implements a number of fundamental changes in the provision of public services, promoting proactive instead of reactive service provision, user-oriented services according to the needs of citizens and businesses, the integrated approach in service design and provision, cross-border services instead of national oriented services and the provision of digital public administration services.

4.2 Interoperability

No legislation has been adopted in this field to date.

4.3 Key enablers

4.3.1 Access to public information

Law on State Information Systems

Adopted in May 2002 and with amendments up to 2014, the Law on State Information Systems aimed at ensuring the availability and quality of information services provided by State and local government institutions in the State Information Systems. The Law determines unified procedures, by which State Information Systems are created, registered, maintained, used, reorganised or closed. It regulates the cooperation between State Information System managers, determines the functions of the maintainer of the State Information System and the rights and duties of the State Information System data subject. Finally, it regulates the security management of the State Information System and specifies the requirements for the protection of critical State Information Systems and State Information System management integrators.

Freedom of Information Law

The Freedom of Information Law, amended on 12 June 2009, transposed the Directive on the re-use of public sector information (2003/98/EC) into national law. According to the amendment, an application for the re-use of existing information at the disposal of an institution shall be drawn up in writing, in accordance with the documentation requirements specified for the relevant information group. In addition, the application shall indicate that the information is requested for the purpose of re-use and the goods or services for which the requested information is necessary. The Law also states that information re-use conditions shall not be imposed. Since 6 October 2015 new amendments to the Freedom of Information Law have entered into force. The amendments transpose the 2013 EU Directive on the re-use of public sector information (2013/37/EU).

On 25 September 2018, the Cabinet of Ministers adopted the Regulation No 611 on the Procedures for Publishing Information on the Internet by Institutions. The Regulation envisages the publication of open data at the public administration's disposal in a machine-readable format jointly with metadata or metadata of the data set, only in the Latvian Open Data Portal.

Accessibility of the websites and mobile applications

The Cabinet of Ministers' Regulation No 611 on the Procedures for Publishing Information on the Internet by Institutions, adopted on 25 September 2018, transposes the Directive (EU) 2016/2102 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 October 2016 on the accessibility of the websites and mobile applications of public sector bodies. Information and digital services become more accessible to users, in particular for persons with disabilities and the elderly.

4.3.2 eID and Trust Services

eID Decision

Decision No 60 §62 of the Cabinet of Ministers of 8 November 2016 approved the information report entitled 'On possible financing solutions for the provision of certification services for use in national identity cards (eID card) and the use of eID cards as primary means for ensuring the person's digital identity'. It endorsed the recommendation for the eID card to become a mandatory personal identification document. It also supported the proposal to include authentication and digital signature certificates in eID cards, enabling eID card users to use electronic identification, electronic signature and time stamping services without limits and free of charge.

Personal Identification Documents Law

The purpose of the Law is to determine personal identification documents and documents certifying legal status of persons as well as documents substituting such documents.

As of 9 May 2019, when legislative changes were made to the Personal Identification Documents Law, the eID card has been defined as a mandatory personal identification document from 1 January 2023 for all citizens and non-citizens of the Republic of Latvia.

Natural Person Electronic Identification Law

The Natural Person Electronic Identification Law came into force on 8 December 2015. The Law defines the requirements for the identification process of natural persons by public institutions for public services in the electronic environment. The Law prescribes duties and responsibilities for identification service providers, electronic public service providers and individuals receiving public services.

Personal Identification Documents Law

The Personal Identification Documents Law was adopted in May 2002. It stated that identification documents shall be published in machine-readable format where applicable. Moreover, in 2004, the Cabinet of Ministers adopted the Regulation on the citizens' identity cards, non-citizens' identity cards, citizens' passports, non-citizens' passports and stateless persons' travel documents', which provided for the inclusion of electronic chips in future identity cards.

A new Personal Identification Documents Law was submitted to Parliament in June 2011. The Law defines the eID card types (citizen, non-citizen, EU-citizen, third-country citizen residence permit and accredited persons eID). The eID card must contain biometric data and information in electronic form, which enables electronic verification of the holder's identity and creation of a secure electronic signature. As such, the eID card can serve as an identity and travel document within the EU, a personal identification tool for eServices, and a way to provide a secure electronic signature. The Law came into force in January 2012. The eID cards have been issued since March 2012.

4.3.3 Security aspects

Personal Data Processing Law

The Personal Data Processing Law came into force on 5 July 2018. The purpose of this Law is to create legal preconditions for the setup of a protection system for personal data (hereinafter - the data) of a natural person at national level by providing for the institutions necessary for such purpose, determining the competence and basic principles of operation thereof, as well as regulating the operations performed by data protection officers, and the provisions concerning data processing and free movement.

Law on the Security of Information Technologies

The Law on the Security of Information Technologies entered into force on 1 February 2011. It aimed to improve the security of information technologies by defining the key requirements for organisations to guarantee the security of essential electronic services. The Law provided for the identification and protection of critical infrastructure, the establishment and organisation of an IT Security Incident Response Institution (national CERT), the determination of conduct in information technology security incidents, the setup of minimum security requirements for State and municipal institutions and the implementation of Directive 2009/140/EC by electronic communications service providers.

4.3.4 Interconnection of base registries

Population Register Law

The purpose of this Law is to prescribe how the unified system of population registration shall function – the Population Register (hereinafter – the Register), how the Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs (hereinafter – the Office) will be provided with the information to be included in the Register and how the information in the Register shall be used.

As of 1 July 2017, when legislative changes were made to the Population Register Law, a new personal identity number format was introduced which does not contain the date of birth. In this context, a new free eService called Conformity of Personal Identity Number to One Person was created. In 2018, the fee-based Current and Previous Personal Identity Number eService was established. Individual personal identity numbers starting with the digits 32 were allocated to all persons whose information was included in the Population Register.

Civil Registration Law

According to the Civil Registration Law, the General Registry of the Civil Registry Office is in charge of preparing, updating and renewing marriage, birth or death registry entries. These are based on civil status act registration documents. Additional pieces of legislation are the Civil Status Registry Act and the Regulations on State fees for the registration of acts of civil status.

The Civil Registry does not provide any open data at the moment. However, other institutions can recover data from the registry via APIs. The Civil Registry is connected with the Enterprise Registry, the Social Information Systems, the Address Registry and the Tax Registry, among others.

Enterprise Register Act

The Enterprise Register Act and the Enterprise Registry implement the registration of those entities as determined by law. This is done to establish their legal status and ensure the public reliability of information laid down in national laws and regulations (regarding the entities to be registered and the legal facts), as well as to ensure the accessibility of information provided by laws and regulations. An amendment to the law, announced in April 2017, established that the Enterprise Registry should no longer be tied to any specific geographical location because it can be managed by any Enterprise Registry branch. The amendment improved and simplified the document circulation for the Enterprise Register, and reduced the formalities for public users.

Additionally, legislation pertaining to the Enterprise Registry can now be retrieved from the legal pages of the Enterprise Registry website.

- Regulations on the Enterprise Register, as well as documents submitted to comply with the duty of state registration;
- Rules on the application forms for entries in the Enterprise Register and registration certificates;
- Rules for applications to make the records of the Enterprise Register appear in the journal of European cooperative societies;
- Regulations on fee-based services related to the Enterprise Register (signature confirmation); and
- Rules on the application forms for entries in the Commercial Register.

Land Registry Law

In alignment with the Land Registry Law of Latvia, the Land Registry is open to all and its records have public credibility. The recording of real estate property rights is mandatory.

Law on Vehicle Registration

The Law on Vehicle Registration states that the Vehicle Registry contains the national inventory and ensures it is updated. State records include each vehicle, or the numerical identification records, technical data and information about its owner or holder. Additional pieces of legislation are:

- the Road Traffic Law;
- Road Traffic Regulations (effective from 1 January 2016);
- Rules on the point system applicable to traffic violations; and
- the Latvian Administrative Violations Code.

4.3.5 eProcurement

Public Procurement Bill

On 21 June 2016, the Cabinet of Ministers approved the Public Procurement Bill which provided that the electronic submission of tenders will be mandatory. This transition occurred in the period from 18 April 2017 to 1 October 2018, when the electronic submission of procurement procedures was successfully centralised. From 1 January 2019, the electronic submission of tenders has become mandatory for all public procurement submissions above EUR 10 000. Public procurement procedure eCertificates were established to provide access to reliable information, regarding both public and private suppliers, by using connections to 123 data bases or notifications from State and local government institutions, to improve the public procurement procedure.

Some changes were made in the eProcurement System Regulation in 2017. These changes gave clarifications regarding the participants in the application for registration and the administrator's initial authorisation forms. Indeed, this was done with the aim of simplifying procedures in order to reduce the administrative burden, facilitate the ability of Latvian entrepreneurs to participate in the foreign public procurement process and increase competition. For society and institutions, the legal framework was improved to ensure better information on procurement procedures, facilitate the procurement procedures and promote their transparency.

There was a gradual transition to the electronic submission of applications and tenders. With the latest amendments to the Public Procurement Law, on 1 July 2020, the electronic submission of procurement procedures (tenders and requests to participate) will in all cases be centralised. The contracting authority must accept an electronic invoice that complies with the legislation on the applicable standards for electronic invoicing, and specification of use of its essential elements. If the public contract so provides, the invoice must include additional essential elements in accordance with the legislation. The Cabinet of Ministers determined the applicable standards for electronic invoicing, their essential elements and the dissemination procedures.

Law on Procurement for the Needs of Public Services Providers

The Law on Procurement for the Needs of Public Services Providers of August 2010 implemented Directive 2004/17/EC, regulating the use of electronic communication means in the public procurement process for the utility sector.

eInvoicing Legislation

The Cabinet Regulation No 154 on applicable standards for electronic invoices and the procedures for the use of the basic elements thereof of 9 April 2019 - issued in accordance with the Public Procurement Law, the Public Service Providers' Procurement Law and the Law on Public-Private Partnerships - determines the applicable standards for electronic invoices, the specifications concerning their basic elements and the procedures for submitting eInvoices. Economic operators in Latvia can submit their eInvoices to central authorities or municipalities through the Central eGovernment Platform. This platform is maintained by a third-party service provider. Economic operators can also submit eInvoices through municipalities' websites. The authorisation and submission process are the same whether one uses the Central eGovernment Platform or the websites of municipalities. The use of official electronic addresses (eAddress) is recommended for the delivery of eInvoices to public institutions.

4.4 Domain-specific legislation

eDemocracy Legislation

On 15 December 2015, the Cabinet of Ministers approved amendments to a Cabinet Regulation that introduced the possibility of initiating official referenda on the dissolution of Parliament or initiating a bill by electronic means. From 1 March 2015, it became possible to initiate a referendum by using other authentication means, including internet bank authentication (currently the most common means of digital identification).
Article 131 of the Rules of Procedure of the Saeima provides that 'at least 10 000 citizens of Latvia, who shall have reached the age of 16 on the day of filing a submission, have a right to file a collective submission with the Saeima'. The collective submission might be presented electronically ('a collective submission that is filed electronically shall be supplemented with technical information confirming the signing of the collective submission and ensuring the possibility to verify the number of signatories, their names, surnames and ID numbers'). In this way the social ePetition platform was deemed legally binding for Parliament.

Electronic Documents Law

The Electronic Documents Law (EDL) came into force on 1 January 2003. The Law transposed the EU Directive on a Community framework for electronic signatures (1999/93/EC), and defined the legal status of electronic documents and digital signatures. According to the Law, electronic documents must be accepted by every public institution (State and municipal). In addition, citizens and businesses can request an electronic reply from the Public Administration. The amendments to the EDL were intended to ensure the widest possible use of secure electronic signatures. The legislation extended the use of secure electronic signatures, excluding previous limits on their use (such as a private business or expedited family law). At the same time, the EDL regulation applies where sectoral laws and regulations did not. Normative acts must comply with the EDL to be valid. This legislative act simplified the procedure for securing electronic signatures and clarified the information to be included in the qualified certificate.

Law on Information Society Services

The Law on Information Society Services, which transposes the EU Directive on certain legal aspects of information society services (2000/31/EC), with particular emphasis on electronic commerce, was approved by the Parliament on 4 November 2004. This Law governs the procedure for the provision of electronic services, the conditions to be respected by eService providers, their responsibility, and the requirements for the protection of consumer rights.

Law on the Official Electronic Address

The Official Electronic Address Act came into force in March 2018 with the purpose of ensuring secure, efficient and high-quality electronic communications and handling electronic documents between public entities and private individuals. It stipulated that public institutions must use their official electronic address (eAddress) from 1 June 2018, when citizens could activate their own individual eAddress. Businesses can receive an email from public authorities within the eAddress system from 2020, or voluntarily one year earlier. Latvia's eAddress will allow citizens and businesses to correspond electronically with public authorities. The eAddress will be the national electronic mailbox for messages and communications under the responsibility of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development and the State Regional Development Agency. As one of the digital communication initiatives in Latvia, the eAddress aims to ensure the transition to digital exchange for communications from all public entities to legal persons and individuals.
Amongst other things, a core task of the solution is to make it possible for the authorities to deliver important information, possibly including sensitive data, securely and digitally to citizens and businesses.

Electronic Communications Law

The Electronic Communications Law entered into force on 1 December 2004. It promotes and regulates the provision of electronic communications services, transposing the EU regulatory framework for electronic communications. The Law details various electronic networks, including public and private electronic networks. In addition, it stipulates the duties and rights of providers, subscribers and users of electronic networks.

4.5 Emerging technologies

Initial Coin Offering legislation

The Financial and Capital Market Commission is actively looking into the Initial Coin Offering (ICO) legislation. The Capital Market Commission published an explanation of the feasibility and the applicable regulation on virtual assets and ICO.

5 | Digital Public Administration Governance

5 Digital Public Administration Governance

5.1 National

5.1.1 Policy

Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development

The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development is the leading State regulatory authority for eGovernment and the digital transformation. The Ministry develops, coordinates and implements Latvia's national policy in the field of digital transformation, electronic government and ICTs for public administration, including State information systems and the one-stop-shop principle in the provision of public and local government services based on four pillars for the development of eGovernment: public sector data for growth, rational exploitation of the public sector ICTs, effective operational processes and quality of eGovernment.

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Electronic Government Department

Within the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development, the Electronic Government Department draws up national policies in the domains of eGovernment, digital transformation and public information systems development.
Three divisions under the Electronic Government Department deal with policy issues:
- The **State Information Systems Division** drafts national policy on information systems development, including the national information system architecture and interoperability policies, the national information system maintenance and security policy, as well as the policy on government information technology development and management.

- The **Information Society Policy Division** drafts the digital transformation policy and participates in the elaboration of policies on the development of eGovernment and public information systems.

- The **State Information and Communications Technology Division** focuses on technical aspects of government ICT development and management.
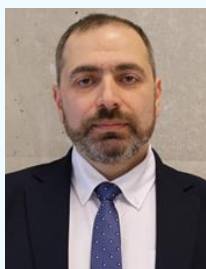
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Public Services Department

The Public Services Department deals with the planning of electronic services and electronic services infrastructures (Electronic Services Division), following the one-stop-shop principle (One-Stop-Shop Division).

5.1.2 Coordination

Electronic Government Department

The Electronic Government Department coordinates the implementation of national policies in digital transformation, eGovernment and public information systems development.

Public Services Department

The Public Services Department coordinates the implementation of the Public Administration electronic one-stop-shop principle and the implementation of eServices.

5.1.3 Implementation

Electronic Government Department

The Electronic Government Department implements national policies concerning digital transformation, eGovernment and public information systems development.

Public Services Department

The Public Services Department coordinates the implementation of electronic services and electronic services infrastructures (Electronic Services Division) as well as the implementation of the one-stop-shop principle (One–Stop-Shop Division).

State Regional Development Agency (SRDA)

The SRDA operates under the supervision of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development. Its aim is to put into practice a well-balanced support policy for State development by implementing national and EU financial instruments that require research work, high-calibre eServices and IT infrastructure for regional development.

Central Government and bodies

The various ministries and subordinate institutions hold responsibility for the implementation of the respective ICT projects. The Electronic Government Department, within the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development of the Republic of Latvia, is the main body responsible for interoperability activities in Latvia.

5.1.4 Support

Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development

The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development provides ongoing support for eGovernment-related activities to bodies such as the State Regional Development Agency (SRDA).

5.1.5 Interoperability coordination

Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development

The main body responsible for interoperability activities in the country is the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development.

5.1.6 Base registry coordination

Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development

The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development co-ordinates the development of base registries from the perspective of a unified State ICT architecture, including data publishing and interoperability aspects.

5.1.7 Audit

State Audit Office

The State Audit Office is the supreme audit institution of the country. Its mandate covers all public bodies at both national and local levels. It provides oversight on the financial statements of ministries, central State institutions and local governments.

5.1.8 Data Protection

Data State Inspectorate

The Data State Inspectorate supervises personal data protection in Latvia. Furthermore, it controls the observation of information systems' security requirements concerning personal data processing and maintains a register of systems processing personal data, as foreseen by the 'Personal Data Protection Law'.

5.2 Subnational (federal, regional and local)

5.2.1 Policy

Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development

The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development is responsible for the development of the digital transformation policy and eGovernment at regional and local levels.

5.2.2 Coordination

No responsible organisations have been reported to date.

5.2.3 Implementation

Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development

The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development is the central implementation body dedicated to eGovernment across regional and local levels.

Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments (LALRG)

Local and regional authorities hold responsibility for the implementation of their respective ICT projects.

5.2.4 Support

State Regional Development Agency (SRDA)

The SRDA is an authority operating under the supervision of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development. The main task of the SRDA is the provision of eServices for governmental and municipal institutions, eProcurement and eGovernance solutions.

The SRDA is the responsible institution for operations and further development of the State and local government services portal, that serves as the single point of contact to access online resources of Latvian public administration institutions, as well as providing centralised access to electronic services supplied by different public administration institutions. The State and local government services portal is part of the EUGO network. The SRDA operates and works on further developments of the Services Catalogue used in the public administration services portal, which is the point of single contact for citizens and businesses regarding the services provided by national and local authorities. The SRDA ensures development and maintenance of the Electronic Procurement System.

5.2.5 Interoperability coordination

No responsible organisations have been reported to date.

5.2.6 Base registry coordination

No responsible organisations have been reported to date.

5.2.7 Audit

State Audit Office

The State Audit Office contributes to the financial governance and the accountability of funds at local level, as well as to fair and transparent decision-making processes in the public sector.

5.2.8 Data Protection

Data State Inspectorate

The Data State Inspectorate oversees personal data protection at local and regional levels.

6 Digital Public Administration Infrastructure

6 Digital Public Administration Infrastructure

6.1 Portals

6.1.1 National portals

State and Local Government Services Portal

The State and Local Government Services Portal provides citizens in Latvia and abroad with access to the online resources of the Latvian State institutions, as well as with centralised access to eServices supplied by different institutions. It is the most visible part of a developed national shared services platform.

In March 2020, the portal offered 122 eServices, 672 external eServices and 4213 public service descriptions. The information is organised according to the life event approach, covering in total 148 life events: life events bring together successive steps for the use of different eSolutions (ICT platforms, eTools and eServices) in one place. These eSolutions enable a person to successfully complete the formalities related to a particular life situation, such as changing residence, changing work, setting up a company and many other situations. The portal has three main functions: information, consultation and access to eProcedures, from basic eDocuments sent by email to advanced fully automated eServices.

The most popular eServices are the Document Check in the Invalid Documents Register, the issuing of account statements for individuals registered in the State-funded pension scheme (2nd pillar pension), the Declaration of Personal Property, as well as the eServices of the Population Register and the State Social Insurance Agency.

There is a wide range of authentication tools available to access eServices in the State and local government services portal including eID cards, eSignature cards, eSignature Mobile, eIDAS (for cross-border authentication) as well as nine different iBanking authentication tools. The portal also provides the opportunity to carry out ePayment services.

eHealth System

The Latvian government implemented an eHealth system which allows citizens to have access to current and historical medical data of patients, so long as medical professionals entered patient information in the eHealth system. The portal can contain hospitals certificates, information on diagnoses, allergies, medicines and medical devices. This way, doctors and pharmacists can quickly obtain reliable patient information. The system ensures that patients follow their treatment as prescribed by their physician. Healthcare institutions and pharmacies can access the system by using patient data information systems integrated with the eHealth system.

In the eHealth system, health professionals can prescribe via ePrescription and give eSick leave certificates; view and add data in a patient's summary (diagnoses, allergies and administered medicines); create an eReferral for a specialist consultation or a diagnostic test; prepare medical documents during a consultation, examination or treatment; view medical documents prepared by other doctors; deny a patient the right to view certain medical data; fill in the patient data in the Register for specific diagnoses. Pharmacists can dispense the prescribed medicines, as well as make their own statistical reports. Patients can access their medical information, grant or refuse access to their records and apply for a new European Health Card.

Online Latvia

The Online Latvia website is a starting point for becoming acquainted with Latvia. It provides background information, a variety of publications on current events occurring within the country. There is an extensive news section, ePresentations and videos about

Latvia, as well as links to other Latvian governmental and private websites. Information is available in multiple languages.

National Open Data Portal

The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development (MEPRD) launched the Latvian Open Data Portal in 2017. This platform provides a single point of access to open government data. The portal currently features 371 datasets from more than 70 data publishers, but this is expected to grow over time, as more data publishers will gradually join the portal. Data publishers are responsible for the data published on the portal. The MEPRD offers methodological support to publishers by providing material that also forms part of the content available on the portal. The technical operation of the portal is carried out by the State Regional Development Agency.

In addition to providing Open Data, the portal offers other features such as a section on data skills, an overview of events as well as references to content developed by the European Data Portal, such as the video Explore Open Data. The Latvian Open Data Portal has been created using the open source technology platform and open source data catalogue of CKAN.

The new Latvian Open Data Portal is harvested by the European Data Portal, which means that all data published on the Latvian data portal is also available on the European Data Portal.

Platform to develop virtual assistants for public administration institutions

In 2018 the national public administration language technology platform Hugo.lv was launched using world-renowned artificial intelligence-based machine translation systems, speech recognition tools and the National Term Database. The service provides automatic translation from Latvian into English and vice versa, as well as from Latvian into Russian to translate texts, documents, and websites enabling multilingualism in the government eServices. The services provided through the platform are customised for the Latvian language and adapted specifically to public sector documents providing much higher translation quality than generic online translation systems.

In 2019, the Centre for Culture Information Systems has launched an innovative shared platform to develop virtual assistants for public administration institutions based on the national public administration language technology platform. This approach makes it possible to significantly save resources, since institutions only need to adjust the virtual assistants to their specific needs instead of developing their own virtual assistant from scratch. The expected outcome of the project is to equip public administration institutions with a modern tool to provide more user-friendly communication and customer-oriented public services in a more cost-efficient, effective, and time-saving manner.

Electronic Declaration System (EDS)

The Electronic Declaration System (EDS) is a safe and handy way for natural and legal persons to submit all tax and informational declarations, as well as requests addressed to the State Revenue Service (SRS). In addition to the submission of documents, the EDS provides online services and various types of reports. It provides free of charge services, guarantees the respect and protection of users' privacy and saves customers' time. From 1 June 2014, all taxpayers' salary tax booklets are available only in electronic format. Both the worker and his or her employer have access to the salary tax booklet through the State Revenue Service. All paper format salary tax booklets issued until 1 June 2014 are no longer valid and cannot be used.

6.1.2 Subnational portals

No particular infrastructure in this field has been reported to date.

6.2 Networks

Trans European Services for Telematics between Administrations

Latvia uses the Trans European Services for Telematics between Administrations (TESTA) network as the main cross border infrastructure to communicate digitally among the EU agencies, institutions and Member States.

6.3 Data Exchange

State Information System Integrator (VISS)

The VISS (in Latvian - *Valsts Informācijas sistēmu savietotājs*) is an integrated set of solutions developed for public institutions to exchange data between various information systems in a platform-independent standardised manner. It also gives access to different shared components for the development of eServices and provides support for the development of infrastructure needed to operate these eServices. Together with the State portal latvija.lv, this system forms a single national electronic service delivery platform. One of the VISS components is the public administration documents management system integration environment (DIV). DIV provides a safe and secure environment between different record-keeping systems of public administration.
The VISS portal provides access to the State Information System Integrator and the infrastructural resources of the Latvija.lv public services portal needed for the development and operation of eServices as well as the access to the catalogue of the public administration services.

Web-based document flow system (DAUKS)

The information system DAUKS was launched in 2007 to provide the possibility to exchange single documents and control the performance of the tasks assigned by the Cabinet of ministers to the public sector bodies. The objective of the system was to switch to a new, fully automated electronic system permitting the standardised and automatic exchange of documents between the State Chancellery and the ministries to prepare Cabinet sittings, to ensure the preparation of Cabinet's documentation according to the procedure set forth in the relevant laws and regulations; to manage Cabinet's documentation. DAUKS allows the simple and secure transfer of data to other systems and offers an external XML-based interface which enables the exchange of documents between various local systems.

National information system for working with European Union documents (ESVIS)

ESVIS was launched in 2014. The ESVIS system is designed to facilitate and ease preparation, coordination, use and circulation of EU documents, providing access to information with the necessary level of protection in a convenient work environment for users of the system.

Court Information System (CIS)

The CIS is a database of legal proceedings aimed at automating the administrative cycle - data registration, processing, storage and availability - thus affecting the efficiency of the court process. It ensures electronic registration and reflection of administrative court, district court and regional (city) court bookkeeping and legal procedures, as well as court statistics record keeping.

6.4 eID and Trust Services

eIDAS Node

In December 2019, the European Commission officially published four Latvian electronic identification schemes, as notified in accordance with procedures set by the eIDAS regulation. With the publication of the Latvian electronic identification schemes, a transitional period has started during which the European Union Member States must ensure that the notified Latvian electronic identification schemes are accepted for access to digital services infrastructures of other EU Member States.

Electronic Identity (eID) card

The concept for the introduction of a new national eID card was approved by the government in 2010. Thereafter the Law on Personal Identification Documents, defining the eID card types, entered into force. The eID card contains biometric data and information in electronic form to enable electronic verification of the holder's identity and the creation of a secure eSignature. As such, the eID card can serve both as an identity and travel document within the EU and as a personal identification tool for eServices, in addition to providing a secure electronic signature. The law came into force in January 2012 and eID cards have been issued since March 2012.

eSignature portal

The LVRTC online self-service website solution was developed by the Latvia State Television and Radio Centre (hereinafter – LVRTC), which is the only certification authority and is fully responsible for the public key infrastructure. The portal does not require smart cards, special equipment or software to create documents with a trusted eSignature, and this lowers costs. It can be used from any device with an internet connection. A document can be signed electronically in a few minutes and received by the beneficiary via email. The portal offers both citizens and businesses extensive information and advice on eSignatures. A mobile eSignature was established in 2017 in Latvia.
At the end of 2018, the LVRTC was registered as a qualified provider of this solution. Consequently, the verification of eIdentity is possible with all eIdentity tools issued by the LVRTC: the mobile application eParaksts (eSignature), the eID card, and the eParaksts (eSignature) card. Such identity verification methods are comparable to in-person identity verification thanks to the personal identification document. The LVRTC has already applied for the launch of eIdentity tools at EU level. The process may take up to half a year, but once completed every user of the eSignature will be able to receive eServices in other EU countries.

Machine-readable passports

Latvian passports comply with the requirements set out by the European Union in November 2007 and with international standards. Passports hold a microchip that contains information on the bearer and the document in a letter-number format, and individual biometric information such as the bearer's photo and fingerprints. The information embedded in the microchip is protected by a security mechanism and a unique eSignature of the issuing institution that verifies the authenticity of the information.

6.5 eProcurement

Electronic procurement system (EPS)

Latvia follows a non-centralised approach to eProcurement. The State Regional Development Agency organises and manages the EPS, which is the first eProcurement system in the Baltic States. The EPS offers faster procurement processes, the possibility to organise the procurement activities of State and municipal institutions, the possibility to combine orders and save State budget resources, and ensures transparency, openness and accessibility to information about the procurement process.

The National Electronic Procurement system was modified in 2017 with the aim of simplifying and reducing the administrative burden for entrepreneurs. The eCertificate was added to the system to allow Latvian businesses to participate in the foreign procurement procedures and enhance their competitiveness.

6.6 ePayment

No particular infrastructure in this field has been reported to date.

6.7 Knowledge Management

National Database on Learning Opportunities

The National Database on Learning Opportunities (2007) was developed and is currently maintained by the State Education Development Agency. It publishes information about the learning opportunities offered by Latvian education providers. It contains information on current learning opportunities in general education, vocational education at secondary level, higher education, adult training (formal and informal) and pre-vocational education in arts and music for school children. This information is constantly updated. The website consists of two parts – the database and the portal – which provide useful additional details such as an overall review of the national education system. Users can also take a variety of self-assessment tests. It also offers a free eGuidance service.

The National Database was created within the framework of the KIPNIS project, which was co-financed by the European Social Fund and the Ministry of Education and Science and is integrated with the European Commission's portal PLOTEUS (Portal on Learning Opportunities Throughout the European Space).

National Digital Library of Latvia (NDL)

The National Library of Latvia has been engaged in the development of the Latvian National Digital Library since 2006. Its goal is to create an infrastructure and a methodology for the digitisation of printed library items and the acquisition of born-digital materials, as well as the preservation of and access to digital content. It currently holds digital collections of newspapers, pictures, maps, books, sheet music, audio recordings and harvested websites. The NDL is the national aggregator of digitised cultural content into the European Digital Library Europeana.

State Integrated Library Information System (SILIS)

The aim of SILIS is to create the IT infrastructure for all State and municipal libraries in Latvia initiated by the State Agency Cultural Information System (CIS). Since the launch of the project in 2001, SILIS has implemented electronic catalogues at regional and national level, retro-converts card catalogues, given access to popular fee-based databases and trained librarians and library patrons, focusing on the development of existing eSkills. Private funding has enabled the creation of free internet access points in all public libraries.

State Integrated Archival Information System (SIAIS)

The objective of SIAIS is to create the IT infrastructure for a State archival system and an integrated platform for archive services. Furthermore, it seeks to ensure the safe long-term storage of State and municipal electronic documents and information, and the public availability of State archival information resources. The project is managed by the State Agency for Information Systems for Culture and co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

The Joint Catalogue of the National Holdings of Museums (JCNHM)

The Joint Catalogue of the National Holdings of Museums (JCNHM) is a catalogue of holdings of all accredited museums (State, local, autonomous and private museums) of Latvia. Overall, there are more than 5.9 million items in Latvian museums. Only about 5% of them are exposed in the permanent and temporary exhibitions. The remaining 95% of them will be available with the help of the Joint Catalogue. The Joint Catalogue offers the possibility to search and see museum objects and collections; to find out the basic information about museum objects; to see pictures of museum objects; to know more about ongoing exhibitions; to send an eCard; to create collections of visitors' favourite items; to purchase files of museum objects.

The project aims to contribute to the knowledge society by collecting data on museum objects in a single system, promoting public awareness of cultural heritage and enhancing the value of heritage accumulated in Latvian museums.

The digitalisation of museum collections and their inclusion in the Joint Catalogue supports the use of museum collections for research, science and education purposes. In addition, the implemented eServices will promote public interest and make historical and cultural heritage accumulated in Latvian museums available to society.

To promote access to digital content, the Joint Catalogue items are integrated in the European digital multimedia online portal – Europeana.

State Information Systems (SIS)

To ensure that State and local authorities offer functions and services to citizens, enforcement authorities create and maintain a variety of electronic databases or State Information Systems (SIS). SIS are a structured set of information technology and database (data/information, which is considered as one unit) aggregate. Individual SIS are an important information resource for the Public Administration.

6.8 Cross-border platforms

No particular infrastructure in this field has been reported to date.

6.9 Base registries

State ICT Resources and Services Register (VIRSIS)

Latvia has started transitioning from the State Information Systems Register (SISR) to VIRSIS. VIRSIS will centrally store data about the information resources processed in the State Information Systems (SIS), as well as information about the technological resources and services required for the operation of the SIS and information about Base Registries.

Population Register

The Population Register is one of the most important national databases holding information on more than 3 million people. The Population Register is set up as a single national population accounting system. It collects information about citizens' name, surname, place of residence, personal identification documents, etc. The information is used for statistical research, tax forecasting, calculation, organisation of elections and other important national processes.

The Population Register will be replaced by the Register of Natural Persons, which will be based on the information already accumulated in the current Population Register, and will also include foreigners who, for example, buy real estate or companies in Latvia. At present, it is difficult to reconcile national registers and verify the identity of foreigners.

From 28 June 2021, Latvia will operate a Register of Natural Persons, which will replace the current Population Register. The purpose of the draft Law on the Register of Natural Persons is to determine the functioning of a uniform system for the accounting of natural persons in Latvia and how information to be included in the register is provided to the

Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs (PMLP), as well as the information of the register has been used. The range of entities included in the Register of Natural Persons will be extended to foreign nationals who enter into legal relationships with the State, for example by purchasing real estate or buying companies. At present, foreigners are not assigned individual personal codes centrally, i.e. each institution assigns its own identifier, and this situation will be fixed. For more information, please refer to the Introduction of the Register of Natural Persons. The Register contributes to the optimisation of public administration work: the uniform registration of all natural persons will avoid duplication of information about a third-country nationals and the need to manually updated it in different national information systems.

The Enterprise Register

The Enterprise Register carries out registration and record-keeping functions for the relevant registers of merchants and their branches, representations of foreign merchants and organisations and representatives thereof, co-operative societies, European economic interest groupings, European commercial companies, European co-operative societies, political parties and associations, administrators, insolvent entities, legal protection and insolvency proceedings, associations and foundations, religious organisations and the institutions thereof, trade unions, mass media, public and private partnership contracts, decisive influences, commercial pledges, spousal property relations and arbitrage.

The Enterprise Register provides information on registered entities and legal facts, ensures the operation and development of the information system upon which it is based, and performs other functions laid down in laws and regulations.

The Enterprise Register provides a range of services electronically, including company registration and liquidation and reference requirement from the Enterprise Register.

The Real Estate Cadastre and the State Address Register

The State Land Service is a governmental institution of the Republic of Latvia in charge of real estate data accumulation and dissemination to institutions responsible for land management and supervision. The State Land Service is supervised by the Minister of Justice.

The State Land Service is responsible for the provision through the State Information System of real estate cadastre and registration of real estate data, maintenance of textual and graphical information in the State Address Register, mass valuation of real estate, implementation of national land reform policies, maintenance of a central database of highly detailed topographic data, maintenance of the Information System on Restricted Zones, cadastral surveying of buildings and groups of premises.

National Register of Vehicles and Drivers

The National Register of Vehicles and Drivers ensures uniform recording of the information to be included in the Register, the entities to whom the information is issued, the procedures for providing information from the Register, as well as the time limits for the storage of such information and the procedures for the deletion of information.

7 Cross-border Digital Public Administration Services

7 Cross border Digital Public Administration Services for Citizens and Businesses

Further to the information on national digital public services provided in the previous chapters, this final chapter presents an overview of the basic cross-border public services provided to citizens and businesses in other European countries. Your Europe is taken as reference, as it is the EU one-stop shop which aims to simplify the life of both citizens and businesses by avoiding unnecessary inconvenience and red tape in regard to 'life and travel', as well as 'doing business' abroad. In order to do so, Your Europe offers information on basic rights under EU law, but also on how these rights are implemented in each individual country (where information has been provided by the national authorities). Free email or telephone contact with EU assistance services, to get more personalised or detailed help and advice is also available.

Please note that, in most cases, the EU rights described in Your Europe apply to all EU member countries plus Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, and sometimes to Switzerland. Information on Your Europe is provided by the relevant departments of the European Commission and complemented by content provided by the authorities of every country it covers. As the website consists of two sections - one for citizens and one for businesses, both managed by DG Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (DG GROW) - below the main groups of services for each section are listed.

7.1 Life and Travel

For citizens, the following groups of services can be found on the website:
- Travel (e.g. Documents needed for travelling in Europe);
- Work and retirement (e.g. Unemployment and Benefits);
- Vehicles (e.g. Registration);
- Residence formalities (e.g. Elections abroad);
- Education and youth (e.g. Researchers);
- Health (e.g. Medical Treatment abroad);
- Family (e.g. Couples);
- Consumers (e.g. Shopping).

7.2 Doing Business

Regarding businesses, the groups of services on the website concern:
- Running a business (e.g. Developing a business);
- Taxation (e.g. Business tax);
- Selling in the EU (e.g. Public contracts);
- Human Resources (e.g. Employment contracts);
- Product requirements (e.g. Standards);
- Financing and Funding (e.g. Accounting);
- Dealing with Customers (e.g. Data protection).

The Digital Public Administration Factsheets

The factsheets present an overview of the state and progress of Digital Government European countries.
The factsheets present an overview of the state and progress of Digital Public Administration and Interoperability within European countries.
The factsheets are published on the Joinup platform, which is a joint initiative by the Directorate General for Informatics (DG DIGIT) and the Directorate General for Communications Networks, Content & Technology (DG CONNECT). This factsheet received valuable contribution from Elita Zvaigzne (Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development of the Republic of Latvia).

The Digital Public Administration Factsheets are prepared for the European Commission by Wavestone

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ISA² is a EUR 131 million programme of the European Commission which develops digital solutions that enable interoperable cross-border and cross-sector public services, for the benefit of public administrations, businesses and citizens across the EU.

ISA² supports a wide range of activities and solutions, among which is the National Interoperability Framework Observatory (NIFO) action.
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