



NIFO Factsheet – Ireland

The main online source for the Irish interoperability activities is the webpage of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. This authority implements eGovernment 2012 – 2015 initiative under the Public Service Reform Plan.

- See <http://egovstrategy.gov.ie/introduction/>

Main interoperability highlights

The Ministry for Public Expenditure and Reform, published on 12 April 2012 the government's new approach to eGovernment, entitled '*Supporting Public Service Reform - eGovernment 2012-2015*'¹. The document identifies a number of priority action areas for public administrations which are intended to enhance public service delivery, ensure that citizens and businesses have ease of access to a range of services through multiple channels, improve data sharing across public sector organisations; and develop a more integrated approach. Government 2012-2015 identifies a number of priority action areas for public organisations to achieve these objectives.

Action 41 of the *Supporting Public Service Reform - eGovernment 2012-2015* document aims at supporting the development of interoperable eServices. In more detail. Action 41 states '*When new eGovernment services are being developed, these will, where appropriate, be designed to support cross organisational data sharing opportunities and to facilitate interoperability. This will be a key element of the National Interoperability Framework which will be prepared to comply with the EU Digital Agenda*'².

Ireland currently has no formal NIF available. The [Department of Public Expenditure and Reform](#) intends preparing a National Interoperability Framework in line with requirements of the Digital Agenda for Europe. This factsheet outlines a brief overview of the existing organisational aspects of central initiatives and gives details of a number of developments, both central and sector specific, that currently facilitate interoperability.

Summary of the NIF

The Centre for Management and Organisation Development (CMOD) is a division in the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. It has a public service-wide brief with responsibility for researching, developing and implementing policies in the areas of telecommunications, technology, shared ICT services, and eGovernment³. It provides a number of central services for public service bodies.

¹ <http://www.epractice.eu/en/library/5360191>

² <http://e.gov.ie/reporting/results/?action=41>

³ CMOD also operates as the sanctioning authority for ICT expenditure in the Irish public service. It represents Ireland at EU level in relation to public service ICT, eGovernment and CIO working groups and fora



The National eGovernment Strategy 2010⁴, issued by CMOD in December 2009, is centred on three key goals:

- Enhanced Information Provision – online information about all services will be improved;
- Enhanced Electronic Delivery of Services - the online delivery of services by all public bodies will be improved and every effort will be made to eliminate the need for non-online channels; and,
- Enhanced Use of Shared Approaches – the public service will seek to make as much use as is feasible of shared approaches in the achievements of the above goals.

Since eGovernment Strategy 2010 was issued, a number of other key documents have been produced at both National and European levels, including: a new *Programme for Government*⁵ following the change of Government in 2011 which promises “more progress on eGovernment and moving services online.

In November 2011 the Public Service Reform Plan⁶ was launched by the Irish government. eGovernment is a very important element of that Plan. It recognises that citizens and businesses expect public services to be delivered faster, better and more efficiently than in the past and that public services are continually improving. Intelligent, targeted use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and eGovernment are key enablers for these improvements.

The eGovernment strategy *eGovernment 2012-2015*⁷ places the user at the centre of eGovernment policy and introduces a new approach which aims to transform how citizens and businesses engage with the state, and reduce the costs of public service delivery and take-up.

eGovernment 2012 – 2015 sets out a vision of what needs to be done to continue the good progress that has already been made in improving citizens’ and businesses’ access to and interaction with Government services⁸.

The Strategy identifies the following Key Principles for eGovernment:

1. The needs of citizens and businesses are at the centre of eGovernment.
2. Public services should be delivered through the most appropriate channels.
3. eGovernment should reduce the administrative burden for citizens and businesses.
4. eGovernment projects should reflect Business Process Improvements, delivering demonstrable efficiency, effectiveness and Value for Money gains.
5. Public Bodies should work to ensure that the online channel is the most attractive option for customers.

⁴ <http://www.per.gov.ie/egovernment-2010/>

⁵ http://www.taoiseach.gov.ie/eng/Work_Of_The_Department/Programme_for_Government/

⁶ <http://per.gov.ie/wp-content/uploads/Public-Service-Reform-181120112.pdf>

⁷ <http://egovstrategy.gov.ie/>

⁸ eGovernment 2012-2015, Introduction: <http://egovstrategy.gov.ie/introduction/>



The eGovernment strategy, includes **44 actions under eight key priority areas** to ensure that the progress already achieved in eGovernment will continue and that Ireland will be in a position to benefit from the opportunities offered by existing and emerging technologies.

High volume eGovernment services can only be successfully delivered and sustained with the provision of robust, integrated 'back-end' processes with a high level of ICT support, including appropriate levels of resilience and security. Public Bodies should ensure that back office business processes and ICT systems are integrated to deliver efficiency improvements and to facilitate greater interoperability. While there is already a great deal of back-end integration between the systems and processes of public bodies, there is scope for doing more.

Action 41: Interoperable eServices of the eGovernment 2012-2015 Strategy sets out that:

“When new eGovernment services are being developed, these will, where appropriate, be designed to support cross organisational data sharing opportunities and to facilitate interoperability. This will be a key element of the National Interoperability Framework which will be prepared to comply with the EU Digital Agenda⁹.”

Ireland has already achieved significant progress in delivering what is considered to be the traditional approach to eGovernment. Evidence of this can be seen on the www.gov.ie website which provides links to over 300 informational and transactional online public services¹⁰.

Alignment NIF/EIF

The NIF/EIF alignment will be made after the formal publication of the Irish NIF.

Other initiatives on interoperability

Open data: data.gov.ie (<http://data.gov.ie/>) is the Irish open data portal that provides access to national datasets. The portal is currently providing access to near 500 datasets (<http://data.gov.ie/dataset>), which are also accessible via ODIP (<http://data.opendatasupport.eu>), the pan-European single point of access to European datasets.

Standards: In general, the market is considered as leading when it comes to standards. While CMOD is responsible for general ICT policy, and has put in place central initiatives or services that facilitate interoperability, specific technology implementations are the individual responsibility of public bodies.

Examples of Projects or Services – Central services:

- **Single Customer View:** CMOD has developed a central system to provide a single view of the identity of Public Service customers. This solution will be instrumental in helping public bodies to improve the quality of customer identity data, improve assurances around identity claims, remove duplication of effort from recording and checking processes, and facilitate the provision of online identity services.

⁹ eGovernment 2012-2015, <http://egovstrategy.gov.ie/back-end-integration/>

¹⁰ For more information on completed and currently carried out initiatives under Action 41, please see the webpage: <http://e.gov.ie/reporting/results/?action=41>



- **Events Notification:** CMOD implemented a solution for the central electronic publication of life events in a simple and secure way.
- **Government Networks/Telecommunications:** Government Networks (GN), managed by CMOD, is a private, managed, secure, reliable, wide area network (WAN) connecting government agencies on a data, voice and video capable network. A number of key Government applications (including G2C and G2B) are supported by this network, such as the Revenue Online System at www.revenue.ie.
- **National Digital Radio Services:** The National Digital Radio Service, based on Tetra, has been implemented allowing for unlimited communications between the various emergency and security services of the State.

Examples of other Projects or Services:

- **Justice Sector – Criminal Justice Interoperability Project (CJIP):** was developed to facilitate the exchange of summons applications made by An Garda Síochána (the national police force) to the District Courts. This was put in place as a solution to a labour intensive administrative process prone to delays. It has eliminated 75% of the administrative process steps and has replaced a paper based information exchange with a standardised integrated electronic information exchange delivering improvements in the timeliness, accuracy and quality of criminal prosecution data.
- **Procurement – eTenders:** www.etenders.gov.ie is part of the Irish Government's strategy for the implementation of eProcurement in the Irish Public Sector. The site is designed to be a central facility for all public sector contracting authorities to advertise procurement opportunities and award notices. This site is interoperable with the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU), allowing Awarding Authorities to publish notices on the site which will then be sent to the OJEU automatically.
- **Public Services Card:** The Department of Social Protection has started rollout of a Public Services Card (PSC) which will bring improvements over the existing Social Services Card and Free Travel schemes. The card includes customer photo identification and introduces a number of significant improvements. The new card incorporates a contactless integrated ticketing chip for travel entitlement on services which have been enabled with smart card reading devices. The new eGovernment strategy will require other Public Service organisations to examine whether the Public Services Card can be utilised as part of their own approach to service delivery.

The portal www.gov.ie provides details of and access to over 300 public services that are available online. Services can be limited to those that allow you to apply for, pay for, complain about or just find various services.

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